WORKERS VANGUARD

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 949 GCIU C-701 1 January 2010

Afghanistan

Obama Escalates Occupation, As Promised

All U.S./NATO Troops Out Now!

On December 1 at West Point, President Barack Obama announced a further escalation of the U.S./NATO occupation of Afghanistan through the mobilization of 30,000 U.S. troops at "the fastest possible pace." No one could miss the irony when, nine days later in Oslo, Norway, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. In his acceptance speech, Obama invoked the virtues of a "just war" in defense of a barbaric occupation that has resulted in the deaths of untold thousands of Afghans and the pounding of villages through aerial bombardment. Obama also took the occasion to rattle sabers at capitalist Iran and the North Korean deformed workers state for their work toward developing nuclear capability in defiance of imperialist threats and sanctions.

The Nobel Peace Prize itself does not have any history of nobility. Past U.S. recipients include Vietnam War criminal Henry Kissinger and Jimmy Carter, who in 1978 directed the CIA to begin a program of massive military and financial support to the fundamentalist *mujahedin* cutthroats in Afghanistan who killed Soviet troops fighting on the side of the modernizing nationalist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) regime. The *mujahedin* forces, who

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South Africa

Fight for a Black-Centered Workers Government!

Break with the Bourgeois Tripartite Alliance!

We reprint the following article from Spartacist South Africa *No. 6 (Summer 2009/2010), newspaper of the South African section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).*

The African National Congress (ANC) wasted no time after sweeping the April parliamentary elections to demonstrate that the new government under Jacob Zuma would crack down on strikes and township protests. The day after the elections, military personnel were called on to break a strike by doctors demanding overdue pay hikes and more funds for the overburdened, hellish public health system. Municipal workers who struck this winter for a rise in their paltry wages were attacked by cops firing rubber bullets and thrown in jail. Protesters throughout the country demanding houses, roads and sewage systems for their impoverished townships have met with similar treatment.

Like the "neoliberal" Thabo Mbeki and Nelson Mandela before him, the populist Zuma is doing his job as chief of the ***capitalist state***—an apparatus of organised violence, based centrally on the police, military and prisons, that is wielded on behalf of the filthy rich ruling class against the overwhelmingly black masses they exploit and oppress. This bourgeois ***class dictatorship***, which continues to defend a system of white privilege, is cloaked by the "non-racial democracy" that was installed in 1994, when white-supremacist apartheid rule was replaced by a government led by the ANC and its Tripartite Alliance partners, the South African Communist Party (SACP) and Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).

As revolutionary Marxists, Spartacist South Africa, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), declared that no party in the April elections represented the interests of the working class and the poor. The SACP and COSATU bureaucracy worked overtime to get out the vote for the ANC, tirelessly portraying Zuma as a "friend" of the workers as opposed to the leaders of the Congress of the People (C.O.P.E.), who split from the ANC to the right after Mbeki was ousted as president last year. But as we wrote in *Workers Vanguard* No. 933 (27 March 2009), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.: "Despite the ANC's 'pro-worker' and 'pro-poor' rhetoric, the ANC and C.O.P.E. are both bourgeois-nationalist—i.e., capitalist—parties" that "represent the interests of the aspiring black bourgeoisie and the predominantly white capitalist ruling class."

EPA

Striking construction workers march in Johannesburg outside Soccer City stadium, 8 July 2009.

At the core of the recent spate of strikes and protests is the explosive anger at the base of society over the failure of the Tripartite Alliance, after 15 years in power, to fulfill expectations of social and economic equality for the majority. Township protesters complain that they voted for a better life but what they have is getting worse. Striking postal workers demanded the closing of the apartheid wage gap. Adding to longstanding mass unemployment, the world recession has thrown hundreds of thousands more out of work.

A new study shows that the chasm

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Beukes/SAPA

AFP

Left: Communist Party general secretary Blade Nzimande with South African president Jacob Zuma (at right) at COSATU national congress, 21 September 2009. Right: Police terror against protesters in Cape Town in July.

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Afghanistan...

(continued from page 1)

threw acid in the faces of those who dared teach schoolgirls to read, included those who went on to found the Taliban and Al Qaeda—Washington's Frankenstein's monster.

In jacking up U.S. forces in Afghanistan, Obama is doing exactly what he promised in his 2008 campaign. As we wrote at the time of his election, Afghanistan is "Obama's preferred theatre of imperialist carnage" ("Fight for a Revolutionary Workers Party!" *WV* No. 924, 7 November 2008). Meanwhile, the slaughter under the U.S. occupation of Iraq continues unabated. Upon assuming power, Obama also stepped up bombing attacks by pilotless drones in neighboring Pakistan. Now, as Jeremy Scahill reports in "The Secret US War in Pakistan" (*Nation*, 23 November 2009), U.S. operations in Pakistan include a secret program in which a division of the infamous Blackwater mercenary outfit working under the Joint Special Operations Command plans "targeted assassinations of suspected Taliban and Al Qaeda operatives, 'snatch and grabs' of high-value targets and other sensitive action inside and outside Pakistan." Noting the escalation of drone bombing raids since Obama's inauguration, Scahill writes, "The Obama administration has now surpassed the number of Bush-era strikes in Pakistan."

The occupation of Afghanistan by U.S., British and other NATO forces, with its attendant atrocities, has fueled bitter resentment among the Afghan peoples. Washington's quisling Afghan president, Hamid Karzai, is widely discredited, not least due to last year's rigged "election" that left him in office. As civilian deaths mount ever higher and detainees continue to be brutalized in the notorious Bagram prison, resistance to the U.S./NATO occupiers is gathering strength. Obama agreed to his military commanders' demand for more forces. However, the latest escalation has caused quivers particularly among Obama's fellow Democrats, reflecting worries in the ruling class—shared by U.S. allies, some of which are threatening to pull out—that Afghanistan is becoming another endless quagmire. Opposition to the occupation continues to grow in the U.S. population, which has been battered by the economic recession that has thrown millions out of their jobs and homes.

Reuters photos

Above: Barack Obama with Nobel Peace Prize, Oslo, December 10. Right: Villagers mourn victims of December 8 NATO attack in Armul, Afghanistan.

As revolutionary Marxists, our starting point is proletarian class opposition to the U.S. rulers and the capitalist-imperialist system as a whole. Insofar as the forces on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan aim their blows against the imperialist occupiers, we call for their military defense despite our political opposition to Islamic fundamentalism and bourgeois nationalism. We demand the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan! Hands off Pakistan and Iran! Defend North Korea! The same capitalist rulers in Washington who rain death and destruction on the peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan have seized on the recession to dole out hundreds of billions to the bloodsucking banks and to rip up union contracts while bailing out the auto giants. ***For class struggle against the U.S. rulers at home! For a workers party that fights for socialist revolution!***

The liberal left cried "betrayal" over Obama's West Point speech. But Obama is loyally serving the interests of the ruling class, which wanted a facelift for U.S. imperialism after eight years of the internationally despised, wacky Bush regime. It was so-called "socialists" who betrayed the working class and oppressed by building liberal "Anybody but Bush" antiwar coalitions and then hailing the election of Obama as a harbinger of "change." The Workers World Party (WWP) proclaimed Obama's election "a triumph for the Black masses and all the oppressed" (*Workers World*, 20 November 2008), while the International Socialist Organization (ISO) enthused in *Socialist Worker* (21 January 2009): "Obama's victory convinced large numbers of people of some basic sentiments at the heart of the great struggles of the past—that something different is possible, and that what we do matters."

What the reformists do is preach the liberal lie that the wars, exploitation and oppression that are integral to the capitalist system can be stopped by exerting pressure on the rulers to change course—"democracy" from below. Thus the ISO cosponsored with the Socialist Alternative reformists a "Seattle Inauguration Day Celebration" that pathetically begged: "We Voted Barack, Now Get Out of Kabul and Iraq!" Now that Obama has done exactly what he promised over Afghanistan, the reformists have ditched their pom-poms, for the moment. Wringing its hands over the Afghanistan troop surge, *Workers World* (2 December 2009) writes that "the administration will have to rely most heavily on its vicious political enemies within the ruling establishment, while alienating its strongest rank-and-file supporters." This complaint dovetails with the worries of Congressional Democrats that the surge, combined with the effects of the recession at home, might ruin their chances in the 2010 midterm elections.

In "Answering Obama's Afghanistan Deceptions" (*Socialist Worker* online, 8 December 2009), the ISO "discovers" the war lies that are used to justify the buildup of troops, complaining that a "skeptical attitude toward the use of U.S. military power is what most of his supporters expected of an Obama presidency." Then there is the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), which, after spending years howling to "Drive out the Bush regime," now lectures its readers to "face reality" about Obama and "judge him by what he's actually doing, not his false narratives, his empty promises, and his double-talk" (*Revolution* online, 13 December 2009).

Lying is what imperialist politicians do. Their whole system of "democracy" is based on the deception that the government serves "the people." The fact, as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels explained more than 150 years ago, is that the bourgeois government serves as the executive committee for managing the affairs of the ruling class as a whole. Bourgeois democracy—paid for with the toil and blood of millions of the imperialists' colonial and neocolonial victims—serves as a cover for the dictatorship of the capitalist class over those they exploit and oppress.

Falling in line behind "democratic" imperialism, the bulk of the reformist left eagerly enrolled in the imperialists' Cold War drive to destroy the Soviet degenerated workers state. This included leading cheers for murderous, reactionary forces like the Afghan *mujahedin*. To this day the RCP is quite proud of standing with those who fought against the Soviet Army's intervention on behalf of the PDPA, which sought to ameliorate the conditions of women who were subjected to the bride price and *burqa* and terrorized for seeking an education. No less enthusiastic was the ISO, which went on to hail the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union itself in 1991-92.

The RCP concocted and still claims a mythical "third force"—unnamed "revolutionary Maoists" (*Revolution* online, 13 December 2009). Bunk! There were *two sides* in the civil war in Afghanistan: the Soviet Army and the U.S.-backed Islamic reactionaries, whose rebellion against the PDPA regime threatened the USSR's southern flank. We Trotskyists took a clear side, proclaiming: Hail Red Army! Extend social gains of October Revolution to Afghan peoples! We denounced Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's withdrawal of troops in 1988-89—an abject capitulation to imperialism that paved the way for the final undoing of the Soviet workers state itself. For the RCP and Maoists elsewhere, it was the Soviet Union that was the "main enemy," as Mao Zedong earlier declared when the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy forged its anti-Soviet alliance with U.S. imperialism. (Begun by the RCP's revered Mao, this treacherous alliance was continued by Deng Xiaoping, reviled by the RCP as a "capitalist roader.")

The ISO social democrats and RCP Maoists contributed what they could to the destruction of the USSR and the restoration of capitalism there. This was a world-historic defeat for the proletariat and the oppressed internationally, including by removing what was the main counterweight to the bloody ambitions of U.S. imperialism. The capitalist-imperialist system will continue to wreak havoc and death until it is overthrown through a series of workers revolutions.

As opposed to the reformists who lull the workers and oppressed with the promise of capitalism reformed, we revolutionary Marxists reaffirm our fight to build a workers party modeled on Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks, which led the workers to power in the October Revolution of 1917. ***For new October Revolutions!*** ■

TROTSKY

LENIN

For the Dictatorship of the Proletariat!

V.I. Lenin's classic 1917 work, The State and Revolution, *is a seminal analysis of the nature of the state and its historical development as a centralized instrument of force in the hands of the dominant social class. Polemicizing against proponents of the bourgeois model of parliamentary democracy, Lenin, writing on the eve of the October Revolution, drew the line between revolutionary Marxism and opportunist betrayal. Invoking the revolutionary boldness of the 1871 Paris Commune—when the Parisian proletariat briefly held power before being drowned in blood—Lenin underlined the necessity of proletarian revolution overthrowing the bourgeois order and smashing the machinery of the capitalist state, replacing it with a workers state.*

Marx's critico-analytical genius saw in the practical measures of the Commune the *turning-point* which the opportunists fear and do not want to recognise because of their cowardice, because they do not want to break irrevocably with the bourgeoisie, and which the anarchists do not want to see, either because they are in a hurry or because they do not understand at all the conditions of great social changes. "We must not even think of destroying the old state machine; how can we do without ministries and officials?" argues the opportunist, who is completely saturated with philistinism and who, at bottom, not only does not believe in revolution, in the creative power of revolution, but lives in mortal dread of it (like our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries)....

We, however, shall break with the opportunists; and the entire class-conscious proletariat will be with us in the fight—not to "shift the balance of forces," but to *overthrow the bourgeoisie, to destroy* bourgeois parliamentarism, for a democratic republic after the type of the Commune, or a republic of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, for the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.

—V.I. Lenin, *The State and Revolution* (1917)

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The closing dete for news in this issue is 15 December 2009.

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CORRECTION

In "Swine Flu Ravages Aboriginal Population" (*WV* No. 942, 11 September 2009), a photo caption wrongly stated that a young Australian Aboriginal girl had died of "swine flu." In fact, the cause of her death is not known. What is known is that she was repeatedly turned away from the hospital, "neglected," as her grieving mother said, because "she was a little black girl."

Defend Simon Singh! Defend Scientific Medicine!

The following statement was issued on December 14 by the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League. It was distributed that evening at a talk by Simon Singh titled "Science and the Battle for Free Speech" at Imperial College London.

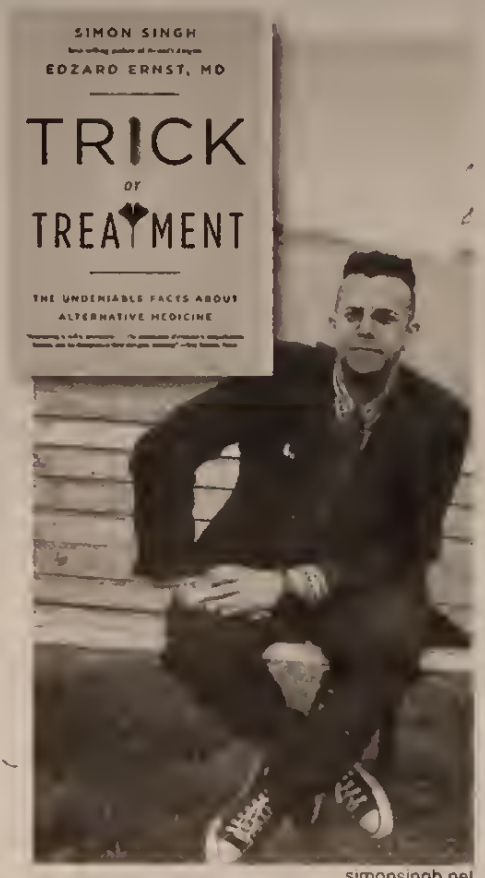
We Marxists defend Simon Singh, the renowned science writer, against the outrageous libel action by the British Chiropractic Association (BCA). At issue is an April 2008 article by Singh, titled "Beware the Spinal Trap" published in the *Guardian* which challenged a statement by the BCA that chiropractic could help treat a number of childhood ailments including colic, ear infections and asthma. Singh said "there is not a jot of evidence" for this claim and asserted that the BCA "promotes bogus treatments." Libel suits against scientists and science journalists are becoming increasingly common. In 2007-08, the *Guardian* and journalist Ben Goldacre, author of the book *Bad Science*, fought a libel case against vitamin pill magnate Matthias Rath who published advertisements in South Africa denouncing AIDS drugs as ineffective while promoting his own supplements. Although Rath was forced to drop the case, the *Guardian* only recovered part of the whopping £500,000 legal fees it incurred.

In the reactionary political climate of today's post-Soviet world, we Marxists find ourselves defending the basic principles of materialism, secularism and the rational humanism of the 18th-century Enlightenment. Against this ideological background, snake-oil treatments, commonly referred to as alternative "medicine," are growing in popularity and many are even being funded by the state. The British government spent £20 million of taxpayers' money on the refurbishment of the Royal London Homeopathic "Hospital," while accident and emergency units are being closed down.

Science-based medicine and quack therapies are irreconcilable. While some popular treatments may be relatively harmless and may sometimes have a placebo effect, more often they are dangerous both in themselves and because they divert patients from needed medical treatment. This is borne out in the book Singh co-authored with Edzard Ernst titled *Trick or Treatment? Alternative Medicine on Trial* (Corgi Books, 2008) an authoritative study of acupuncture, homeopathy, chiropractic therapy and herbal medicine. The authors concluded that "In fact, not only are such treatments unproven, but over and over again we have seen that alternative medicine is also potentially dangerous." Regarding chiropractic therapy, they said it "might offer some marginal benefit, but only for back pain—all its other claims are unsubstantiated."

The libel writ from the BCA quickly followed the publication of *Trick or Treatment?* The *Guardian* had offered the BCA space for a response to Singh's article. But the BCA declined, preferring instead to hide behind the English libel laws. The BCA writ has sparked a public campaign and over 20,000 people have signed a petition calling for reform of the libel laws because they "discourage argument and debate" and have no place in scientific disputes.

English libel laws, which are enforceable in other countries, are so favourable to the claimant that London has been dubbed "a town named sue." The English libel system has no relationship to the question of truth. Indeed it is nothing more than a protection from the truth for the rich and well-born. Unlike in the U.S. for example, where the accuser must prove that the statement in question is false, in England the burden of proof is on the defendant. With the costs of litigation 100 times higher than in most other European countries, more often than not cases are never taken to court but succeed in their dirty work simply by intimidating journalists, newspapers and other publishers.



simonsingh.net

As Simon Singh says: "Any publisher has to make a calculation on whether to defend a writ not on whether they have a strong case but on whether they can afford the extraordinary costs of running a case to court" (*Scotsman*, 11 December 2009).

The British capitalist system is to blame for the inadequate education system that results in widespread ignorance of the principles of science among the population, and for failing to provide decent healthcare for the mass of the working people. In these circumstances many people turn to remedies that promise miracles.

It is scandalous that in the 21st century Prince Charles, heir to the throne of the mediaeval institution of the monarchy, received £900,000 from the Department of Health to promote "alternative therapies," which are international multibillion-dollar businesses, while Simon Singh has had to fork out £100,000 (thus far) fighting the BCA libel suit. The libel laws are used to defend the interests of big business. We also defend Dr. Peter Wilmshurst, a consultant cardiologist at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, who criticised the research data used to promote a new heart implant and was sued by the manufacturer. He faces financial ruin as a result of a libel suit by U.S. company NMT Medical.

Marxism has as its foundation the gains of the Enlightenment and bourgeois revolutions which freed scientific and social development from the shackles of feudalism. The triumph of capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union in 1991-92 has ushered in a period of theoretical, political, social and not least sexual reaction. There has been a growing assault on science, including from Christian fundamentalists seeking to undermine the teaching of Darwin's theory of evolution. Particularly in this context it has become necessary to reassert the basic premises of historical materialism and the corresponding programmatic principles of Marxism.

The libel laws in this country are part of a system, including the institution of Parliament, that exists to keep the working class "in its place." We look forward to the day when the libel laws and the system of lies they uphold—including feudal relics such as the monarchy, the House of Lords and established churches—will be swept away by socialist revolution. A future international planned socialist economy will provide free, good quality healthcare for all and sweep away the material basis for the persistence of dangerous anti-scientific quackery. In a world communist society—where social classes and all forms of oppression are part of a distant, barbaric past—mankind will finally be able to put into place the power of science in the service of all humanity. ■

Revenge for Exposing Death Row Frame-Ups

Illinois: Hands Off Northwestern Innocence Project!

AP

November 1998 conference on death penalty at Chicago's Northwestern University Law School featured 30 people who had been released from death row after proving their innocence.

We print below a December 3 Partisan Defense Committee letter to Illinois' Cook County State's Attorney protesting the prosecutors' outrageous effort to subpoena student records from the Medill Innocence Project at Northwestern University's journalism school. As the PDC letter explains, for many years the school's faculty, students and staff have been instrumental in lifting the lid on a series of frame-ups of innocent people in the grips of the Illinois prison system. In 1996, Medill students working under professor David Protess won national recognition after they dug up critical evidence clearing the "Ford Heights Four," four black men who had languished in prison for 18 years, falsely convicted of the 1978 murders of a white couple. Then in 1999, Protess's students blew open the frame-up of innocent death row inmate Anthony Porter, after which Protess set up the Innocence Project as a permanent feature of the journalism school.

After the exoneration of Porter in 1999, Republican governor George Ryan imposed a moratorium on executions in Illinois. In 2003 he emptied death row, pardoning four innocent men and commuting the death sentences of all the other 167 inmates. Ryan's wholesale clemency order was met with howls of protest from the Democratic machine of Chicago mayor Richard Daley, who had presided over many of those frame-ups as Cook County State's Attorney in the 1980s. It was none other than Barack Obama, then a State Senator from Chicago's South Side, who promoted a package of death penalty legislative "reforms" so that the state's discredited killing machines could go back into operation. As Marxists, we welcomed Ryan's clemency order curtailing the death penalty, which we oppose on principle, and explained: "To get rid of the barbaric state machinery of capitalist rule requires the forging of a workers party, in opposition to the Democratic and Republican parties of capital, to lead the multiracial proletariat to power" ("Illinois Governor Empties Death Row—Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!" *WV* No. 796, 31 January 2003).

* * *

The Partisan Defense Committee vigorously protests your office's effort to force the Medill Innocence Project at Northwestern University's school of journalism to turn over student grades, e-mails, academic records, investigative materials, and course syllabi. This is a transparent effort to intimidate the Innocence Project faculty and students for their efforts to expose frame-ups of innocent men and women in the Illinois prisons.

For more than a decade, Medill journalism faculty and students have been instrumental in exploding frame-ups in a number of high profile cases in Illinois, including that of death row inmate Anthony Porter in 1999, which ultimately led Republican governor George Ryan to commute the sentences of all the inmates on the state's death row.

Most recently, the Innocence Project has exposed new evidence pointing to the innocence of Anthony McKinney, who is still in prison for a 1978 shooting of a security guard. Seething over this blow to the state's frame-up machinery, your office responded by subpoenaing academic records from the Innocence Project under the pretext of attacking the students' "bias, motive and interest"!

This blatant attempt to chill the Innocence Project's journalism and investigations presents a dire threat to anyone who would dare to expose and protest state frame-ups and the machinery of repression, including the racist death penalty.

The PDC vehemently demands: ***Hands off the Medill Innocence Project!*** ■

Critical Notes on the "Death of Communism" and the Ideological Conditions of the Post-Soviet World

We print below, slightly edited for publication, a 14 March 2009 document by Spartacist League Central Committee member Joseph Seymour. The document was a contribution to discussions and debates preceding the 13th National Conference of the Spartacist League, U.S. section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). For a report on the conference, see "'Dog Days of the Post-Soviet Period'" (WV No. 948, 4 December 2009).

By Joseph Seymour

At our International Executive Committee plenum in early 2008, there was a discussion of and, I believe, inchoate differences over the content of the term "death of communism," which is key to understanding the political-ideological conditions of the post-Soviet world. At the time I argued:

> "An important question in the discussion of the work in South Africa and Mexico...is whether and in what sense these countries and other countries—China's been mentioned, Greece—are an exception to what we call the 'retrogression of consciousness' and the 'death of communism' ideology. But the concept of an exception implies a norm. So what's the norm? The overwhelming majority of our tendency is located in the advanced capitalist-imperialist countries of West Europe and North America.... It's here that we every day, pervasively, encounter the 'death of communism' ideology. And I think that this has conditioned a certain skewed and deformed understanding of the radically changed ideological and political contours and divisions throughout the world. "Almost every time we use the term 'death of communism' we link it to bourgeois triumphalism. We're not talking about the triumphalism of the bourgeoisie of India or Egypt or Brazil. We're talking about the triumphalism of the Western imperialist, centrally American, bourgeoisie. But a disbelief in the possibility of a future international communist society—and that's the crux of the 'death of communism'—in Third World countries is not and cannot be identified with American imperialist triumphalism and domination. What you have rather is the rise of fairly significant, with a broad base of support, political-ideological movements which claim to be *opposed* to American imperialist triumphalism. The obvious example is, of course, nationalist populism in Latin America exemplified by Hugo Chávez. But you also have the same phenomenon in a very right-wing way which is the rise of anti-Western Islamic fundamentalism in the Near East. Osama bin Laden, Hugo Chávez, Tony Blair, Bill Clinton all represent the 'death of communism' in different ways in different national contexts."

The crux of the "death of communism" is just that: a *dis*belief in the historical possibility of a global communist civilization in the Marxist sense. This is a ***basic common ground*** shared by diverse political tendencies with often strongly antagonistic attitudes toward Western imperialism, parliamentary democracy, a capitalist market economy and other divisive issues (e.g., environmental degradation) separating left and right in the conventional usage of these terms.

To make sure we all understand the terms of discourse, I'll briefly restate the main features of a fully communist society on a global scale. Economic scarcity has been overcome, thereby leading to the elimination of wage labor ("from each according to his ability; to each according to his needs"). Alienated labor has been replaced by creative, scientific and cultural work (Marx once pointed to composing music as an example of the latter). The state has withered away so that, in Engels' words, the governing of men has been replaced by the administration of things. Racial, national and ethnic affiliation has disappeared through widespread interethnic procreation and global mobility ("the international soviet shall be the human race"). The family has been replaced by collective institutions for housework and the nurturing and socialization of children.

Left: Boris Yeltsin waves Russian flag on barricades of capitalist counterrevolution in Moscow, August 1991. ICL distributed tens of thousands of leaflets headlined, "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" Below: Spartacists protest Yeltsin visit, New York City, 1992.

Sygma

WV Photo

The overwhelming majority of self-considered leftists over the age of, say, 40 or 50 regard a future society described above as utopian. The overwhelming majority of younger leftists, represented, for example, in the "social forum" milieus, are effectively ignorant of and indifferent to the Marxist concept of a global communist civilization. Their concerns are ***defensive and minimalist***—supporting the democratic rights of oppressed peoples (e.g., the Palestinians), halting the dismantling of the "welfare state" in West Europe, preventing the further degradation of the environment (global warming).

I'll recast my argument by referencing Lenin's *The State and Revolution*. When this work was published in 1918 and in subsequent decades, the basic difference between revolutionary Marxists and other left tendencies concerned the subject matter discussed in Chapter I ("Class Society and the State"). In it Lenin summarily states:

> "The theory of Marx and Engels of the inevitability of a violent revolution refers to the bourgeois state. The latter *cannot* be superceded by the proletarian state (the dictatorship of the proletariat) through the process of 'withering away,' but, as a general rule, only through a violent revolution." [emphasis in original]

In the post-Soviet period, the most fundamental difference between ourselves and other left tendencies concerns the subject matter discussed in Chapter V ("The Economic Basis of the Withering Away of the State"), which is summarily explained in the following passage:

> "The economic basis for the complete withering away of the state is such a high stage of development of communism at which the antithesis between mental and physical labour disappears, at which there consequently disappears one of the principal sources of modern *social* inequality—a source, moreover, which cannot on any account be removed immediately by the mere conversion of the means of production into public property, by the mere expropriation of the capitalists.
>
> "This expropriation will make it *possible* for the productive forces to develop to a tremendous extent. And when we see how incredibly capitalism is already *retarding* this development, when we see how much progress could be achieved on the basis of the level of technique already attained, we are entitled to say with the fullest confidence that the expropriation of the capitalists will inevitably result in an enormous development of the productive forces of human society." [emphasis in original]

The post-Soviet generation of leftist activists cannot readily understand the ideas expounded above because they don't think about them.

American Imperialist Triumphalism Is *Not* the Problem

While clarity on the question of the "death of communism" will not resolve our problems, continued unclarity will continue to aggravate our problems. The failure to recognize the most fundamental difference between ourselves and the rest of the left—that we do *not* share the same ultimate goal—has been an important underlying factor in recurrent political problems in the party.

While he was still *Workers Vanguard* editor, Jan Norden [currently of the centrist Internationalist Group] consciously and consistently regarded the "death of communism" as primarily an expression of American imperialist ideological triumphalism. Hence his belief that the 1994 Zapatista-led uprising of impoverished Indian peasants in southern Mexico was a powerful counterblow weakening, at least in Latin America, the ideological effect of the fall of the Soviet Union. Since Norden's defection from our organization in 1996, there has been a tendency in our party to lump together under the heading of "the regression of consciousness" (a term I coined in the fight with Norden) a disbelief in a future communist society, Western imperialist triumphalism and traditional social-democratic reformism. Some comrades have argued that our basic difference with the rest of the left is over the reformability of the capitalist state, as if we were still back in the days of Lenin versus Kautsky in the immediate aftermath of the October Revolution.

A standard formulation in both our public literature and internal discourse is that the effect of the "death of communism" is "uneven" internationally. The term "uneven" implies that the effect can be quantitatively measured on a linear scale: quite high in the U.S. and France, much lower in Mexico and South Africa. As a one-time student and then teacher of academic economics, I think of a bar graph measuring and comparing, for example, per capita national output in different countries. But the differential effect internationally of the "death of communism" ***cannot be understood*** in that way. We are confronted with ***different forms not different levels*** of post-Soviet ideology.

Consider Russia in this respect. In explicating the concept of the "death of communism," we frequently use the formulation that the former Soviet Union is viewed at best as a "failed experiment." That is generally true in West Europe and North America. It is less true in much of the Third World. And it is ***not at all true*** in Russia. Quite the opposite. The politically dominant section of the new Russian capitalist class, represented by Vladimir Putin, views the former Soviet Union as the most successful experiment ever, so to speak, of Russian-centered state-building. In 2005, Putin declared that the collapse of the Soviet Union was the "greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century" (quoted in Edward Lucas, *The New Cold War: Putin's Russia and the Threat to the*

West [2008]). I assume a similar attitude toward the former USSR is widespread throughout Russian society at large.

In the past few years, the Putin regime and the Russian elite more generally have sought to restore Stalin's historical reputation as the premier leader of a Russian-dominated world power in the 20th century. The Russian ambassador to NATO displays a picture of Stalin in his office. A popular TV show, "The Name of Russia," ranks Stalin as one of the country's five greatest historical figures (*Economist*, 27 November 2008). In 2007, an officially sponsored educational guide, *A Modern History of Russia, 1945-2006: A Teachers' Manual*, compared Stalin favorably with Peter the Great: "Stalin followed Peter the Great's logic: demand the impossible...to get the maximum possible." It continues:

> "He [Stalin] is considered one of the most successful leaders of the USSR. The country's territory reached the boundaries of the former Russian Empire (and in some areas even surpassed it). A victory in one of the greatest wars was won; industrialisation of the economy and cultural revolution took place successfully, resulting not only in mass education but also in the best educational system in the world. The USSR became one [of] the leading countries in science; unemployment was practically defeated."
>
> —quoted in Lucas, *The New Cold War*

Hardly the description of a "failed experiment."

In a way it is more difficult for us to address the form taken by the "death of communism" in present-day Russia than in West Europe and North America. In the latter countries, the former Soviet Union is still primarily identified with "socialism," not "Russian imperialism." Stalin is viewed and generally vilified as a disciple of Marx and Engels. In Russia, Stalin is viewed and frequently extolled as the successor of Peter the Great and Catherine the Great. For many Russians, communism has not died because it never lived in the first place. .

Even before the severity of the current world economic downturn became evident last fall, "free market" triumphalism had ceased to be an important current in the climate of bourgeois opinion even in the U.S. Today, prominent and respected spokesmen for American finance capital such as former Federal Reserve head Paul Volcker foresee a deep and prolonged global downtum. Comparisons with the Great Depression of the 1930s are becoming commonplace. The Tory mayor of London commented that reading the London *Financial Times* these days is like spending time with a millennial suicide cult. Nonetheless, no current of bourgeois opinion is now concerned with the prospect of imminent socialist revolutions anywhere or the revival of mass communist parties claiming the Marxist-Leninist tradition.

Willy Römer

Ullstein Verlag

Robert Sennecke

Above: Armed workers occupy Berlin newspaper district, January 1919. Above right: Communist leaders Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg were murdered that month as SPD traitors Scheidemann, Noske and Ebert (right) drowned workers revolution in blood.

Of Ends and Means: A Historical Journey

In Chapter V of *The State and Revolution* in the section on "The Higher Phase of Communist Society," Lenin wrote:

> "From the bourgeois point of view, it is easy to declare that such a social order is 'sheer utopia' and to sneer at the socialists for promising everyone the right to receive from society, without any control over the labour of the individual citizen, any quantity of truffles, cars, pianos, etc. Even to this day, most bourgeois 'savants' confine themselves to sneering in this way, thereby betraying both their ignorance and their selfish defence of capitalism."

By the term "bourgeois savants," Lenin meant those intellectuals who avowedly supported and justified the capitalist economic system. He did *not* include in this category the ideological spokesmen for the Socialist (Second) International, such as Karl Kautsky, who considered himself an orthodox Marxist.

Whether by 1917-18 the right-wing leaders of the mass social-democratic parties (e.g., Friedrich Ebert in Germany, Albert Thomas in France, Emile Vandervelde in Belgium) subjectively still believed in a future socialist society is another question. In all likelihood they did not. But neither did they publicly repudiate the traditional goal of the socialist movement as a utopian project.

At the beginning of the German Revolution, in November 1918, the centrist Independent Social Democratic Party presented a series of conditions (demands) for a coalition government with the Social Democratic Party (SPD) on the basis of the then existing workers and soldiers councils. The first of these was: "Germany should be a socialist republic." To this the SPD leadership responded: "This demand is the goal of our own policy. However, the people must decide on this through the constituent assembly" (quoted in John Riddell, ed., *The German Revolution and the Debate on Soviet Power: Documents, 1918-1919: Preparing the Founding Congress* [1986]). In attacking the Bolshevik Revolution and the nascent Communist International, the social-democratic leaders primarily condemned the dictatorship of the proletariat as a violation of democracy, which they identified with a parliamentary-type government elected by universal and equal suffrage.

Petrograd, 1917: Leaflet issued by Petrograd Soviet's Military Revolutionary Committee announces overthrow of bourgeois Provisional Government and victory of workers revolution. Below: Red Guards, soldiers and sailors in front of Smolny Institute, headquarters of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets.

Pyotr Otsup

Here it is useful to look at *Lenin's Moscow*, a memoir written in the late 1940s-early 1950s by Trotsky's colleague and friend Alfred Rosmer. Rosmer had been an anarchist and then a leading revolutionary syndicalist intellectual in France before adhering to the newly formed Communist International. In this memoir, Rosmer recounts the initial reaction to Lenin's *The State and Revolution* among both "orthodox" social democrats like Kautsky and Jean Longuet (Marx's grandson) and among anarchists:

> "It was an extraordinary book and it had a strange destiny. Lenin, a Marxist and a social democrat, was treated as an outcast by the theoreticians of the socialist parties which claimed to be Marxist. 'It isn't Marxism,' they shrieked, 'it's a mixture of anarchism and Blanquism.' One of them even found a witty turn of phrase and called it 'Blanquism with *sauce tartare*.' On the other hand, for revolutionaries situated outside the mainstream of orthodox Marxism, for the syndicalists and anarchists, this Blanquism, sauce and all, was a pleasant revelation. They had never heard such language from the Marxists they knew."

Louis-Auguste Blanqui (1805-1881) was the last major representative of the Jacobin communist tradition that originated with Babeuf's Conspiracy of Equals in the latter days of the French Revolution. The Babouvist conception of communism (developed in a pre-industrial society) was one of distribution and consumption rather than production and the overcoming of economic scarcity. However, in labeling Lenin a "Blanquist," Kautsky, Longuet, et al. were not referring to that aspect of the Jacobin communist outlook. By Lenin's "Blanquism" they meant the insurrectionary overthrow of the capitalist state organized and led by a revolutionary vanguard party.

As Rosmer pointed out, *The State and Revolution* was well-received by many anarchists and syndicalists, some of whom thought that Lenin was moving from Marxism toward their own political camp. However, more doctrinally knowledgeable anarchists understood that while Lenin agreed with them on the need for the insurrectionary overthrow of the bourgeois state, he still maintained, indeed emphasized, the Marxist program of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a transition to a fully communist society. In this regard, Rosmer cites an imprisoned German anarchist, Erich Mühsam, writing in 1919:

> "The theoretical and practical theses of Lenin on the accomplishment of the revolution and the communist tasks of the proletariat have provided a new basis for our action.... There are no more insurmountable obstacles to a unification of the whole revolutionary proletariat. It is true that the communist anarchists have had to yield on the most important point of disagreement between the two great tendencies of socialism. They have had to abandon Bakunin's negative attitude to the dictatorship of the proletariat and accept Marx's opinion on this point."

For Mühsam, the "disagreement" between Bakunin and Marx over the dictatorship of the proletariat concerned the means to achieve a shared ultimate goal: a classless, egalitarian and stateless society.

We all know that in a political polemic the ideas and positions that are *not* argued against are in their own way as important as those that are argued against. One does not argue against positions that one's opponent does not hold and especially where there is a common ground. For example, in polemicizing against black liberals and leftist radicals in the U.S. we do not refute the false notion expounded by some right-wing racists that blacks are "inferior" to whites. In 1918-20, Lenin and Trotsky each wrote a book-length polemic against Kautsky. Nowhere in either *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* or *Terrorism and Communism* do they argue against the position that a communist society in the Marxist sense is utopian since Kautsky did not hold such a position.

Let's fast forward to the late 1930s, when the international Communist movement had become completely Stalinized. Specifically, let's consider the young Maxime Rodinson, a French Jewish intellectual who later became a prominent left-wing scholar writing on the Near East and Islamic society. In a 1981 essay, "Self-Criticism," he recalled the mindset that caused him to join the French Communist Party in 1937 (he left in 1958):

> "Adherence to Communism entailed, and still entails, commitment to a struggle that is supposed to enable humanity to accomplish an essential and eminently beneficial leap: to put an end to a system that permanently produces poverty and crime, that subjugates and condemns millions of people throughout the world to an

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Critical Notes...

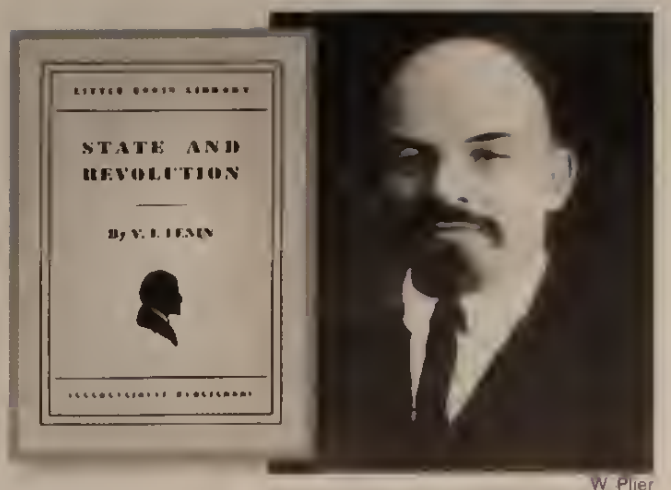
(continued from page 5)

> atrocious life, or even to death. The intent is to create a liberated humanity in which all can blossom to the full extent of their best potential, in which the collective of free beings will control the administration of things and will lay down the minimum of rules indispensable for harmonizing relations among human beings."
>
> —*Cult, Ghetto, and State: The Persistence of the Jewish Question* (1983)

As an intellectual, Rodinson could articulate the liberating goals of Marxism better than the many millions of young workers who joined the Communist parties in France and Italy, India and Vietnam and elsewhere during the Stalin era. Nonetheless, many of these workers—not all, to be sure—were also ***motivated*** by a future vision of all-sided social liberation. They did not view the Communist parties only as political agencies to defend and further their economic and other social (e.g., national) interests within the existing capitalist-imperialist system.

In general, politically advanced workers and leftist intellectuals who supported the mass social-democratic parties did not share the Marxist conception of a genuinely communist society. But they, too, aspired to a radically different and better society than their own. In 1961, the left social-democratic British intellectual Ralph Miliband published a book highly critical of the Labour Party titled *Parliamentary Socialism: A Study of the Politics of Labour*. The book came out in the immediate aftermath of a failed attempt by the party's right-wing leaders to scrap Clause IV of Labour's 1918 constitution. Clause IV was generally seen as Labour's maximal program: "To secure for the workers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible, upon the basis of the common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange." In describing the battle over Clause IV in 1959-60, Miliband wrote: "In the face of the violent resistance [by the party's working-class base] this encountered, the proposal had to be dropped." By the 1980s no one would still have used the term "parliamentary socialism" to encapsulate the program or even official doctrine of the British Labour Party. And in 1995, Clause IV was dropped from the party's formal program at a special conference despite opposition from some of the big unions.

Verlag Kurt Desch

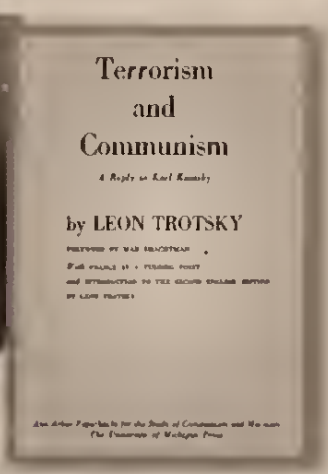


W. Plier

Lenin's *The State and Revolution* (1917) defended Marxist understanding of the state as instrument of class rule against social-democratic revisionists such as Karl Kautsky (left).

In the early to mid 1960s, there was a leftward radicalization among student-youth and some older intellectuals in the U.S. One institutionalized expression of this was the annual Socialist Scholars Conference in New York City. In 1966, the organizers of the conference invited Marxist historian Isaac Deutscher to give a presentation on "socialist man." At the time, the cultural and psychological character of a truly socialist society, how people would think and act, was a matter of intense interest among young leftist intellectuals not only in the U.S. but throughout the world. For example, in the early 1960s Che Guevara was writing about eliminating alienated labor in "socialist" Cuba. For a retrospective analysis of Guevara's thoughts on this question, see "'Radical Egalitarian' Stalinism: A Post Mortem," in *Spartacist* No. 25 (Summer 1978). In his presentation on "socialist man," Deutscher addressed a number of issues that the post-Soviet generation of leftist activists do ***not*** think about at all.

Brown Brothers



***Terrorism and Communism* (1920), written by Leon Trotsky at height of Russian Civil War, polemicized against anti-Bolshevik pamphlet of the same name written by Kautsky, who made common cause with imperialism in the name of "democracy."**

Huntington Versus Fukuyama Revisited

My thinking about the "death of communism" and the ideological conditions of the post-Soviet world was initially mainly developed in the course of informal discussions with Norden between 1991 and his departure from our organization in 1996. As previously noted, Norden identified the "death of communism" primarily as an expression of American imperialist triumphalism. Thus he often linked the term to George Bush's formula of a "new world order" proclaimed at the time of the 1991 Gulf War against Iraq. Norden believed that the recognition by the main body of our tendency's leadership that the character of the post-Soviet period was marked by a historic retrogression in the political consciousness of the working class internationally was a capitulation to the pressures of American imperialist triumphalism.

Norden's approach to this question was influenced by the views of a right-wing (then neo-conservative) American intellectual, Francis Fukuyama, who declared that the collapse of the Soviet bloc signaled the "end of history." An oversimplified version of Fukuyama's "end of history" thesis became widely known among what can be called the educated American public, the kind of people who subscribed to the *New York Review of Books* and occasionally read *Foreign Affairs*. I don't know if Norden actually read Fukuyama. I did and I also read those right-of-center American bourgeois ideologues, notably Samuel P. Huntington and Zbigniew Brzezinski, who strongly disagreed with Fukuyama's rosy vision of the post-Soviet world. I'm reviewing this debate because it's useful in understanding the relationship of the "death of communism" to the various currents of post-Soviet bourgeois ideology especially in (but not limited to) the Western capitalist countries.

Fukuyama took the term and concept of the "end of history" from German philosopher Georg Hegel. Hegel used that expression to describe the world-historic consequences of the 1806 battle of Jena in which the army of Napoleonic France defeated the Kingdom of Prussia. In the aftermath the French occupied and governed western and southern Germany. Hegel was one of a small number of prominent German intellectuals who supported and collaborated with the Napoleonic regime that he considered to be historically progressive.

Hegel's concept of the "end of history" had both a negative and a positive component. The negative component was that the dominant ideology of late feudal Europe—monarchical absolutism sanctioned and supported by the Christian churches—had lost its former power to shape the future course of history. The positive component was that the liberal principles of the French Revolution as understood by Hegel (and represented for him by Napoleon) had become all-conquering in the realm of ideas and over time a new sociopolitical order would be established throughout Europe in conformity with the new *zeitgeist* (spirit of the age).

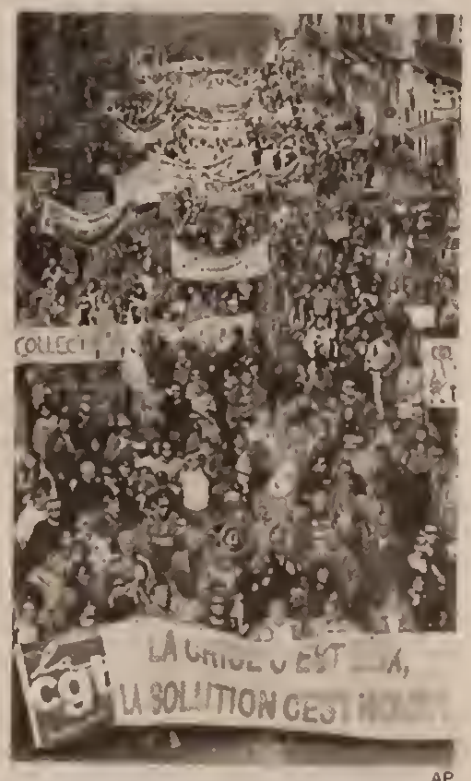
Likewise, Fukuyama's version of the "end of history" had negative and positive components. The negative component was, of course, the "death of communism":

> "While communist power persists in the world, it has ceased to reflect a dynamic and appealing idea. Those who call themselves communists now find themselves fighting continuous rearguard actions to preserve something of their former position and power. Communists now find themselves in the unenviable position of defending an old and reactionary social order whose time has long since passed, like the monarchists who managed to survive into the twentieth century."
>
> —*The End of History and the Last Man* (1992)

Fukuyama here expressed a common coin among all currents of post-Soviet bourgeois ideology.

It was the positive conclusions he drew from the collapse of the Soviet bloc that was the crux of his "end of history" thesis. He maintained that the sociocultural values and corresponding economic and political institutions of the Western capitalist world would eventually prevail on a global scale:

> "It is against this background that the remarkable worldwide character of the current liberal revolution takes on special significance. For it constitutes further evidence that there is a fundamental process at work that dictates a common evolutionary pattern for ***all*** human societies—in short, something like a Universal History of mankind in the direction of liberal democracy....
>
> "And if we are now at a point where we cannot imagine a world substantially different from our own, in which there is no apparent or obvious way in which the future will represent a fundamental improvement over our current order, then we must also take into consideration the possibility that History itself might be at an end." [emphasis in original]



AP

French workers demonstrate in Marseille against economic crisis, March 2009. Banner reads: "They Are the Crisis, We Are the Solution!"

Fukuyama's notion of a universally triumphant "liberal revolution" came under heavy fire from some prominent intellectual spokesmen for American imperialism. His main antagonist was Samuel P. Huntington who counterposed his own "clash of civilizations" thesis to Fukuyama's "end of history." Referring specifically to Fukuyama, he commented condescendingly: "The moment of euphoria at the end of the Cold War generated an illusion of harmony, which was soon

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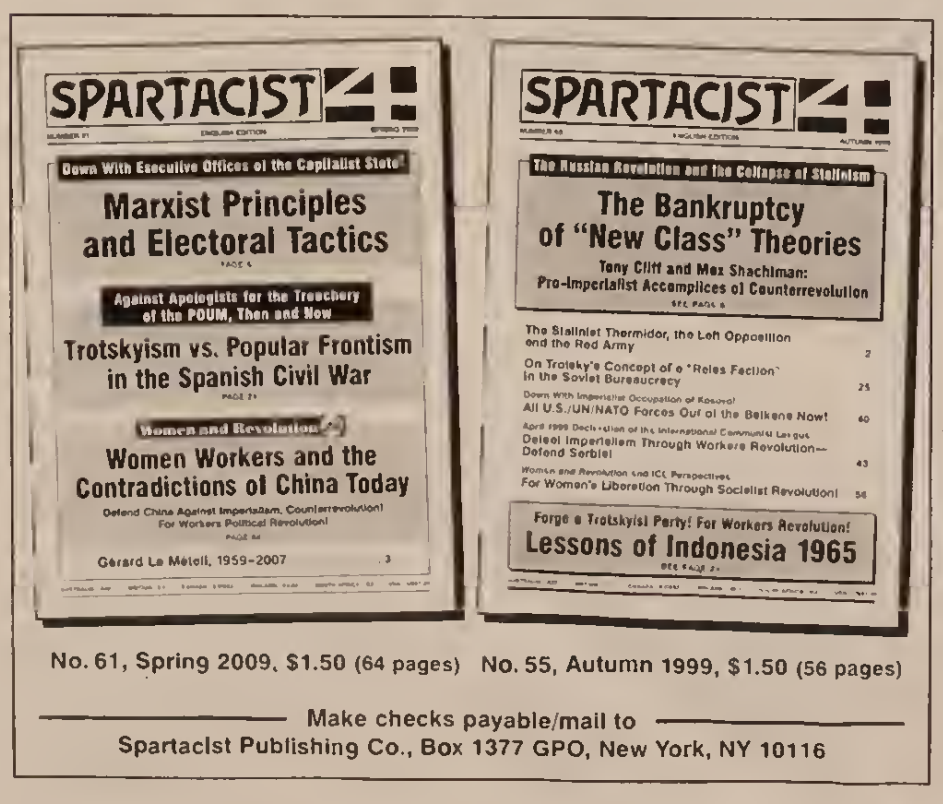

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South Africa...

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hetween the wealthy at the top and the masses at the bottom has become the largest in the world, surpassing that in Brazil. The wealthiest are overwhelmingly white and enjoy First World living conditions, while blacks as well as coloured [mixed-race] and Indian toilers are at Third World levels. This is a damning indictment of the SACP/COSATU misleaders, who promised the masses that the alliance with the bourgeois ANC would bring social transformation and equality. The result instead was neo-apartheid capitalism. While the political superstructure underwent a major change with the end of the apartheid system of rigid, legally enforced racial segregation and subjugation, the foundation of the capitalist economy remains the superexploitation of mainly black labour.

As the black majority's anger over their unbearable conditions continues to build, the Zuma government has made clear its intention to beef up the state's arsenal of repression against labour and the poor. On the opening day of the COSATU national congress in September, Zuma lectured delegates about "violent strikes." In a speech a week later, he supported giving cops more leeway to "shoot to kill," supposedly to fight South Africa's "abnormal criminal problem." Zuma's reprimands, echoed by COSATU general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi, did not go down well at the COSATU congress. Leaders of the SAMWU municipal workers and SATAWU transport workers unions criticised the top COSATU leadership for failing to condemn police attacks on their strikes this year. But these same unions include cops and security guards whose job is to defend capitalist rule and profits by violently repressing workers and the poor. SSA demands: Cops and security guards out of the unions!

To justify their class-collaborationist alliance with the bourgeois ANC, the SACP and COSATU tops speak of a "developmental state" under the ANC in which the working class must fight for "hegemony." This claptrap was answered almost 140 years ago by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Summing up the lessons of the 1871 Paris Commune, the founders of scientific socialism insisted that "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes" (1872 preface to a German edition of the *Communist Manifesto*). The capitalist state must be smashed through socialist revolution and replaced with a workers state—the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Based on this fundamental Marxist understanding, SSA fights for a black-centred workers government that would expropriate the capitalist bloodsuckers and build a society where the wealth created by labour is used for the benefit of all. Socialist transformation, extending throughout Southern Africa, would depend above all on the victory of proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries of the U.S., West Europe and Japan, where the workers are ruthlessly exploited and, in times like the current economic crisis, thrown onto the scrap heap. It will take an international socialist planned economy, based on the highest level of technology, to lift the urban and rural masses out of poverty and backwardness and create a classless society of material abundance—the beginning of communist society.

Nationalism and Class Collaboration

Squalor in black and coloured townships; miserable wages for factory workers, miners, teachers and municipal workers; jails jam-packed with black and coloured youth and deaths in police custody rising steadily; the criminal neglect of health care in the midst of the AIDS pandemic and other rampant diseases: all are signs that the masses' aspirations for social equality and a decent life have not even begun to be met. An education specialist at the Development Bank of Southern Africa gave one stark measure of persistent, deep racial inequality: While one in ten white children get A-level passes in their matriculation [high school graduation] exams, the number for black learners is *one in 1,000*. Underlining that blacks continue to be treated as second-class citizens, recently the newly appointed vice-chancellor of University of the Free State pardoned the so-called "Reitz Four," inviting them to return to the university in what was grotesquely called an act of "racial reconciliation." The four white racist students had been kicked out last year following outrage over a video they made of black campus workers being fed urine-laced food and enduring other humiliations, part of a racist campaign resisting integration of campus residences.

The achievement of national liberation for the oppressed majority is inseparable from the emancipation of the overwhelmingly black working class from the chains of capitalist exploitation. It is the proletariat, which can stop the flow of capitalist profits by withdrawing its labour, that has the social power to lead the unemployed and all the urban and rural poor in overthrowing the murderous capitalist profit system.

A prerequisite for such revolutionary struggle is the political independence of the working class from the bourgeoisie. In struggling for this basic Marxist principle, we say that the Tripartite Alliance must be broken along *class* lines. The Tripartite Alliance is a nationalist popular front—the South African variant of a governmental coalition binding a reformist workers party to the bourgeoisie. The SACP and COSATU tops perpetuate the illusion that the interests of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie can be expressed in a common programme, like the "national democratic revolution." This is the essence of their class collaborationism. In fact, the class interests of the exploited are irreconcilably counterposed to those of their exploiters.

In the early days of the "new South Africa," telling the truth about the bourgeois class nature of the ANC was fighting words. After 15 years of neo-apartheid capitalism, many working-class militants —including inside the SACP—now will admit that the ANC is a bourgeois party. The critical question is, what programmatic conclusions does one draw from this. Some reformist dissidents use this to argue that the SACP should adopt a more "independent" posture in order to gain more influence within the Tripartite Alliance, thus giving a "left" cover for maintaining the subordination of the working class to its capitalist exploiters in the nationalist popular front. This is counterposed to the programme of class independence of the workers from the bourgeoisie and its parties, which means recognising that the ANC is a party of the class enemy. We seek to win advanced workers to this programmatic understanding, which is needed to politically arm them to fight against the betrayals of the SACP and COSATU tops.

There is growing disgruntlement at the base of the SACP over the more forward role their leaders are playing in the Zuma government. Many are angry that Blade Nzimande took a post as Higher Education Minister in direct violation of the SACP constitution, which specifies that the party's general secretary must serve full-time as an official of the SACP. (Of course, serving as ANC government ministers has been the rule for leading SACPers ever since the late Joe Slovo was Housing Minister under Mandela.) Nzimande has also been ridiculed for his R1.1 million BMW, which many see as exposing the hypocrisy of SACP leaders who decry the corruption of government ministers.

The SACP is an example of what revolutionary leader V. I. Lenin called a bourgeois workers party, with a working-class base and a pro-capitalist leadership and programme. A revolutionary workers party will be built in political combat against the SACP and other reformist organisations, whose best elements must be won away from their treacherous leaderships to the Leninist-Trotskyist programme. We fight to forge a party modelled on the Bolshevik Party, which under the leadership of Lenin and Leon Trotsky led the workers in Russia to power in the October Revolution of 1917. In South Africa, such a party can only be built independent of *and in opposition to* the bourgeois ANC. This requires a head-on fight against the nationalist ideology that holds the Alliance together and poses the biggest obstacle to winning advanced workers to a Marxist worldview.

Nationalism is a bourgeois ideology that obscures the fundamental class divide in society by preaching the common interests of all who were oppressed under white racist rule. Thus, everyone from government ministers on the gravy train to black mothers in desolate villages struggling to keep their families fed are told to unite in the "broad church" of the ANC, which the SACP falsely portrays as the party of national liberation.

In South Africa, where the capitalist class is white (now including a handful of others) and the working class is overwhelmingly black, class divisions are hugely distorted by the lens of racial colour. The SACP uses this historic characteristic of South African society to openly and shamelessly advance its popular-front alliance with the ANC. The confusion of race and class fostered by nationalism is seen in the widespread misidentification of all poor and oppressed people—from township unemployed to petty shopkeepers—with the working class, which is defined by its key role in the process of production.

Most dangerous of all is the reformist left's embrace of the cops as fellow workers. Black cops under apartheid were despised because they were correctly seen as serving the interests of the oppressor. But Alliance apologists say that under the ANC-led "democratic" government, the police serve the people. So a white cop may still be a racist Boer, but a black cop is your "comrade." Meanwhile, they're both attacking strikes and firing rubber bullets at township and student protesters.

The Debate About Race

Against a backdrop of strikes and township struggles, the Tripartite Alliance has seen sharpening divisions at the top, mainly pitting elements on the ANC's right wing against the SACP/COSATU bloc. Former Intelligence chief Billy Masetlha condemned the growing influence of SACP and COSATU leaders at the top of the ANC. Speaking from a bourgeois perspective, he correctly pointed out to the *Mail & Guardian* (9 October 2009) that the ANC "was not founded on a socialist agenda." Earlier, ANC Youth League (ANCYL) leader Julius Malema sought to take advantage of the unease at the SACP's base by condemning Blade Nzimande as a fake working-class leader.

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Gideon Mendel

Coloured (mixed-race) seasonal farm workers in Western Cape province, April 2007. Black and coloured masses live in poverty under neo-apartheid capitalism.

Robert Botha

January 2000: After more than 4,000 workers at Volkswagen plant near Port Elizabeth staged wildcat strike in defense of suspended shop stewards from NUMSA metal workers union, the SACP-dominated NUMSA bureaucracy mobilized to break the strike. Over 1,300 workers were fired and 200 armed cops occupied surrounding townships to suppress resistance.

Just Out!

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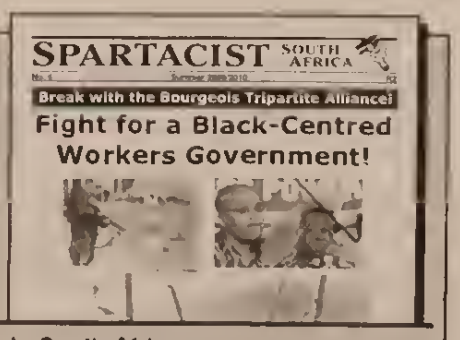

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South Africa...

(continued from page 7)

Malema also made several appeals to the ANC's plebeian base by pointing to the perpetuation of white privilege, touching off a wide debate in South Africa on the question of race.

In the main, Malema voices the interests of the emerging black bourgeoisie. While spewing reactionary demagogy about sex under the pretext of fighting "imperialist" concepts, Malema complains about the Zuma government giving whites, coloureds and Indians key economic portfolios. While not naming names, an SACP Central Committee discussion document for an upcoming SACP policy congress responded by criticising a "new anti-left tendency" in the ANC espousing "narrow 'Africanist' ideology."

Despite differences in rhetoric and (sometimes) policy, both sides uphold ANC nationalism. For the SACP and the ANC mainstream, this comes wrapped in the doctrine of "non-racialism," a vague concept mainly defined in opposition to the racially exclusive citizenship and property rights that were the rule under British-dominion and apartheid rule. As Govan Mbeki, a historic leader of both the SACP and the ANC, explained: "The ANC is struggling to form one people, to be represented in one parliament in one country.... The ANC is seeking to forge one nation, building a non-racial democracy in a unitary state" (quoted in Michael MacDonald, *Why Race Matters in South Africa* [2006]).

"Non-racialism" promotes the notion that national liberation and social equality for South Africa's vast majority can be achieved under capitalism. The bankruptcy of this perspective is exposed every day in every way. The stark truth is that 15 years after the demise of apartheid, ***whites—joined by a handful of blacks—are still on top and the black masses on the bottom.*** "Non-racialism" provides an increasingly flimsy cover for the neo-apartheid capitalist order that is administered by the Tripartite Alliance government.

AP

17 November 2009: Zimbabwean immigrants outside De Doorns, the Western Cape, after being driven from their homes by anti-immigrant attacks.

The continuation of "racialised inequality," as the SACP document delicately puts it, is not due to the so-called "1996 class project," which the SACP invokes in order to blame the [Thabo] Mbeki camp for the masses' misery. The "class project" really began at the ANC's founding in 1912 by tribal chiefs and others in the black elite. The ANC always represented the interests of an aspiring black bourgeoisie, although there was no meaningful layer of black capitalists until recently. When the ANC consummated its aspirations to share power with the white ruling class in 1994, it was the logical outcome of its programme.

A key factor in the negotiated settlement with the apartheid government was the demise of the Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state that had been the main sponsor of the ANC and SACP in the international arena and had given military support to their guerrilla actions, largely symbolic, against the apartheid state. With the end of the Cold War, the ANC/SACP quickly came to terms with Western imperialism and its South African junior partner. Nelson Mandela himself assured the capitalists that an ANC-led regime would defend private property. In 1990, even before the ANC came into power, the SACP sent its leader Joe Slovo and NUMSA metalworkers union chief Moses Mayekiso to break a strike by workers at Mercedes-Benz in East London who had occupied their plant. Once in power, the Tripartite Alliance imposed austerity and continued to break strikes, from the 1995 nurses strike and the 2000 VW strike to this year's strikes by courageous public hospital doctors.

It was the elementary duty of Marxists to defend the ANC, the Pan Africanist Congress and the Azanian People's Organisation against murderous apartheid repression. At the same time, genuine Marxists give no *political* support to such petty-bourgeois and bourgeois parties. Writing after the 1994 elections, when Nelson Mandela became South Africa's first black president, the ICL declared: "The ANC-led nationalist movement cannot achieve any semblance of 'liberation' for the nonwhite masses since it is committed to maintaining South African capitalism, which has always been based on the brutal exploitation of the black toilers" ("South Africa Powder Keg," *Black History and the Class Struggle* No. 12, February 1995).

Against all forms of nationalism, we counterpose the fight for a black-centred workers government as part of a socialist federation of Southern Africa. It will take a workers government centred on the black majority to break the power of the Randlords, expropriate capitalist property and begin the socialist reconstruction of society, finally opening the road to the liberation of the non-white masses. Such a government would not be racially exclusive but would unite the many black tribal- and language-based groups along with the coloured and Indian populations while providing ample room and full democratic rights for those whites who would accept a government centred on the black toilers and join in building a society based on genuine equality.

The call for a black-centred workers government is an application of Leon Trotsky's perspective of permanent revolution. Trotsky explained that in the colonial and neocolonial world, where capitalism developed belatedly, the democratic tasks associated with the bourgeois revolutions of the 17th and 18th centuries can be achieved only through proletarian revolution. Adequate housing for the millions in the townships, squatter camps and villages, electricity and water for the entire population, free quality education, the eradication of *lobola* (bride price) and other traditional patriarchal practices oppressive to women: these desperately needed measures require the socialist transformation of the economy and society under the dictatorship of the proletariat, fighting to promote socialist revolution internationally.

Bitter fruits of class collaboration. Right: Thousands of workers and Communists were slaughtered following Chiang Kai-shek's coup in China, 1927. Below: Remains of Communist Party headquarters in Jakarta, Indonesia, in October 1965, as some one million Communists, workers, peasants and ethnic Chinese were massacred.

no credit

Militant

As Trotsky stressed in an April 1935 letter to his South African comrades: "Insofar as a victorious revolution will radically change not only the relation between the classes, but also between the races, and will assure to the blacks that place in the state which corresponds to their numbers, insofar will the *social* revolution in South Africa also have a *national* character." He continued:

> "The historical weapon of national liberation can be only the ***class struggle***. The Comintern [Communist International], beginning in 1924, transformed the program of national liberation of colonial people into an empty democratic abstraction which is elevated above the reality of class relations. In the struggle against national oppression different classes liberate themselves (temporarily) from material interests and become simple 'anti-imperialist' forces."

Under the direction of the Stalinised Comintern, the forebears of the SACP adopted the dogma of "two-stage revolution," which they translated as the "national democratic revolution" that would somehow "grow over" into the socialist revolution. The "two-stage" schema tells workers and the oppressed to subordinate their interests to those of the "progressive" bourgeoisie in the first stage of the revolution, while the second stage—socialism—is relegated to the distant future. In fact, the second stage never comes. From China in 1925-27 to Indonesia in 1965, the "first stage" has ended in the slaughter of Communists, militant workers and peasants. In South Africa, it means the subordination of the SACP to the ANC. The only "growing over" we have seen is some top "Communists" and union leaders becoming millionaires.

The Left and "Nation Building"

In reviving the call for a black-centred workers government, we note that Spartacist South Africa incorrectly stopped using this slogan after 2001. We remarked in "South Africa: For a Black-Centered Workers Government!" (*Workers Vanguard* No. 911, 28 March 2008) that "this deprived us of a crucial weapon in combating the illusion that the 'national democratic revolution' has achieved a 'rainbow nation' based on the ANC's celebrated doctrine of 'non-racialism'." Exemplifying those who purvey such illusions, the Workers International Vanguard League ludicrously claimed that our call "plays into the hands of those who still seek to divide the formerly politically oppressed along ethnic lines" (see our 1998 pamphlet *Hate Trotskyism, Hate the Spartacists* No. 1, "A Reply to the Workers International Vanguard League").

Everyone with eyes to see knows that tribal and ethnic divisions in the townships and villages that were consciously fostered by the apartheid regime are thriving under the "new dispensation," where those at the bottom continue to be pitted against each other in a desperate struggle for survival. As the enforcer of austerity, the Alliance government cannot help but perpetuate these divisions and engage in divide-and-rule tactics. ANC veteran of the anti-apartheid struggle and black capitalist Tokyo Sexwale, who is currently the Minister of Human

International Communist League pamphlet comprising three articles from ICL press: "The Development and Extension of Leon Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution," "A Trotskyist Critique of Germany 1923 and the Comintern" and "Down With Executive Offices of the Capitalist State!" These articles together constitute an introduction to the historically founded principles and program of Trotskyism (i.e., genuine Marxism).

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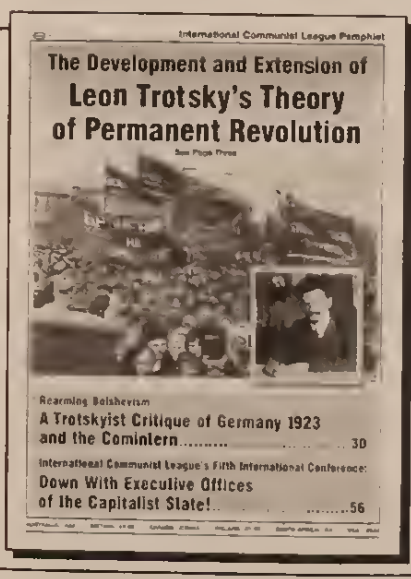

Settlements, infamously remarked in 1994 that protests by impoverished coloured township residents made him vomit. The Democratic Alliance, a party of white privilege espousing "free market" capitalism, was able to defeat the ANC in the April provincial elections in the Western Cape largely through huge gains among coloured voters, many of whom had been alienated by the perceived favouritism of the ANC toward blacks.

The ICL stressed in the 1997 pamphlet, *The Fight for a Revolutionary Vanguard Party: Polemics on the South African Left*, that "if the masses' frustration does not find expression along *class* lines it will fuel and embitter every other kind of division." This result was seen in all its horror in the anti-immigrant pogroms of May 2008. The violence began when Alexandra residents demanding decent housing turned against immigrants in the township, unleashing an orgy of pillage and murder that spread throughout the country. Sixty-two people died in the pogroms, many of them South Africans killed because they "looked like" immigrants or did not belong to whatever the dominant ethnic group was in their area. Tens of thousands of immigrants were forced to flee the country or to try to survive in wretched refugee camps.

We issued a leaflet after the violence broke out calling on COSATU and other unions to mobilise in defence of the besieged immigrants, demanding: Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! No deportations! Immigrants, who have always formed a large part of the mining workforce and other components of the economy, must be organised into the unions with full rights and benefits. The unions should fight for jobs and decent housing for all, which could unite the poor across national, tribal and ethnic lines against the common capitalist enemy.

The urgent necessity for such struggle was again seen in this year's township protests, which often turned into attacks

Eric Miller

The launching of COSATU union federation in the Western Cape, March 1986.

SA History Online

Some 3,000 delegates gathered in Kliptown, Soweto, in 1955 to adopt the ANC's Freedom Charter.

on Pakistani and Somali shopkeepers and other immigrants. Standing in the way of a united proletarian fight are the workers' misleaders, who accept the capitalist system of scarcity and promote bigotry against "foreigners" through protectionist "proudly South African" campaigns. The situation cries out for the construction of a multiracial vanguard party that would act as a tribune of the people. Championing all the exploited and oppressed, such a party would, as Lenin wrote in *What Is To Be Done?* (1902), "produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation" in order to "clarify for *all* and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat."

The SACP/COSATU tops and other proponents of "nation building" accept as sacrosanct the borders drawn up by the British colonialists, who practiced divide-and-rule in Southern Africa and throughout the Empire. South Africa is not a nation but a colonial-derived state comprising many national, tribal and ethnic groups, several of which span the country's borders. As we wrote in "South Africa Powder Keg":

> "It is entirely possible that under proletarian class rule a South African nation will evolve through widespread intermarriage and the development of a common culture and language or languages. However, 'nation building' is in no sense the supreme goal of the socialist revolution, nor will national integration be confined to the people now living within the borders of the South African state."

Only a *sociolist federotion of Southern Africo* can provide a framework for overcoming the ethnic and tribal divisions bequeathed by the imperialists in a democratic, egalitarian and rational manner.

Marxism vs. Reformist Nationalization Schemes

The need to forge a new proletarian leadership that is at once revolutionary and internationalist is underscored by the economic recession, which has led to renewed protectionist and anti-immigrant chauvinism in South Africa and around the world. The 1938 Transitional Programme, written by Trotsky during the Great Depression as the founding document of the Fourth International, is acutely relevant to today's situation. To solve the problem of mass unemployment, the Transitional Programme calls to shorten the workweek and divide the available work at no loss in pay: *Jobs for all!* We call for massive pay hikes and a sliding scale of wages to keep pace with inflation. To answer the desperate need for houses, schools, roads and hospitals, we demand a massive programme of public works, with labour paid at good union rates. This points to the need for comprehensive economic planning, which the anarchic capitalist profit system cannot provide. Trotsky declared:

> "Property owners and their lawyers will prove the 'unrealizability' of these demands. Smaller, especially ruined capitalists in addition will refer to their account ledgers. The workers categorically denounce such conclusions and references.... The question is one of life or death of the only creative and progressive class, and by that token of the future of mankind. If capitalism is incapable of satisfying the demands inevitably arising from the calamities generated by itself, then let it perish. 'Realizability' or 'unrealizability' is in the given instance a question of the relationship of forces, which can be decided only by the struggle. By means of this struggle, no matter what its immediate practical successes may be, the workers will best come to understand the necessity of liquidating capitalist slavery."

The current economic crisis has thrown "neoliberal" policies, such as banking deregulation, out of favour in bourgeois governments around the world, which have turned to wage-slashing corporate bailouts and other spending to try to kick-start renewed economic growth. No amount of such tinkering can solve the problem of capitalist economic crises, which are *inherent* to an economic system defined by the private ownership of the means of production and the drive for profit (see the 2009 Spartacist pamphlet, *Karl Marx Was Right: Capitalist Anarchy and the Immiseration of the Working Class*).

Earlier this year, ANCYL leader Julius Malema, the Young Communist League and COSATU officials revived talk about nationalising the mines that constitute the core of the economy. Zuma quickly assured business leaders that the ANC had no intention of nationalising mines and that this was all just a friendly debate inside the Alliance. The talk about nationalisation was at bottom just another bourgeois reform scheme. As several commentators pointed out, one factor driving the debate is the failure of some "black economic empowerment" mining enterprises whose owners cannot meet debt repayments and need to be bailed out. After nationalising one or two mines, the government could sell them to some of its cronies.

Giving the ANC some left cover, the Democratic Socialist Movement (DSM), part of the Committee for a Workers' International, and Keep Left!, followers of the late Tony Cliff, jumped in with calls for "workers control" of nationalised enterprises. These reformists' entire framework is to pressure the bourgeois Alliance government to serve the interests of workers and the poor. The DSM was buried inside the ANC for more than a decade before declaring in 1996 that the ANC was "pro-capitalist." The Keep Left! leadership in effect called for a vote to the ANC in the April elections in an article by Alan Goatley and Claire Ceruti in *Socialism From Below* (November 2008) on the split of "Terror" Lekota and other Mbekiites from the ANC. The article falsely drew a "class line between the Lekota ANC and the Zuma ANC" and declared that "boycotting is not an option with this choice."

Malema & Co. lean on the ANC's 1955 Freedom Charter, with its statement that "the mineral wealth beneath the soil shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole." There is nothing socialist about the Freedom Charter. At best it poses nationalisation within the framework of capitalism, not uncommon for bourgeois populists in Third World countries dominated by imperialism. Deliberately vague on how the transfer of property is to be realised, the Charter states that "only a democratic state...can secure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief." As we noted in "Forge a Leninist-Trotskyist Party to Fight for Workers Revolution!" (*Spartacist South Africa* No. 5, Spring 2007): "'The people' are divided into different classes with counterposed interests. In referring to 'democracy,' the ANC meant *bourgeois democrocy*, which means above all defence of the 'right' of the capitalists to exploit the workers."

Answering Malema in the *Sunday Times* (19 July 2009), Ben Turok, an ANC Member of Parliament and author of the Freedom Charter's economic clause, wrote: "It was the colonial aspect that the charter sought to reverse, not private ownership of property. It has never been the intention of the ANC to create a command economy by nationalisation, either then or now." He added: "Certainly, as the ANC moved to a negotiated settlement, there was no suggestion of taking over major industry, and this continues to be the formal policy position."

Revolutionary Marxists are for the expropriation of the mines, large farms and factories, without compensation to their former owners. This is key to achieving genuine national liberation for the oppressed masses. But it will take a *workers state* to carry this out.

Trotsky noted in the Transitional Programme that while Marxists are for the expropriation of the capitalist class as a whole, it is also appropriate to occasionally call for "the expropriation of several key branches of industry vital for national existence, or of the most parasitic group of the bourgeoisie." Trotsky continued: "The difference between these demands and the muddleheaded reformist slogan of 'nationalization' lies in the following: (1) we reject indemnification; (2) we warn the masses against demagogues of the People's Front who, giving lip service to nationalization, remain in reality agents of capital; (3) we call on the masses to rely only upon their own revolutionary strength; (4) we link up the question of expropriation with that of seizure of power by the workers and farmers."

The mining bosses who for more than a century have reaped incredible profits from the superexploitation of mainly black labour should not get one cent in indemnification. Against Vavi, Nzimande, Malema and all the demagogues of the nationalist popular front, we say that only by taking power in their own hands can the workers begin to reconstruct society in their interests. This requires building a Leninist-Trotskyist party in South Africa as part of the struggle to reforge the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution.■

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Cop Vendetta Against Chicago Bus Driver

Hands Off Ricardo Mendoza!

CHICAGO—On November 7, Chicago police arrested bus driver Ricardo Mendoza on bogus felony charges of disorderly conduct and obstructing justice, with a judge requiring him to post a $50,000 bond. Earlier, unmarked police SUVs repeatedly circled past Mendoza's house, according to his union, Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 241. What was Mendoza's "crime"? He had been brutally beaten by an off-duty cop two months before.

On September 12, Sgt. Thomas O'Grady attacked Mendoza as he was driving the 62 Archer bus in Chicago's Loop business district. The cop, who claimed that Mendoza's bus cut him off while he was riding a bicycle, climbed onto the bus in a fury and punched Mendoza in the face, breaking his glasses. It was not until O'Grady stormed onto the bus a second time that two uniformed officers who happened to be on board finally physically restrained him. Mendoza was treated at the Northwestern Memorial Hospital emergency room and referred to a specialist for his eye injuries. He has not been able to work since the assault. As usual, the cop who committed the assault goes uncharged.

Soon after, Mendoza filed a $1 million federal civil rights lawsuit against the City of Chicago and O'Grady, who was reportedly on desk duty at the time while under investigation for an earlier incident. ATU Local 241 officials held a press conference in defense of their union brother, at which union president Darrell Jefferson said: "We think the attack against Mr. Mendoza was brutal, violent, uncalled for and a violation of his civil rights." Mendoza deserves every penny he can get.

It was only after Mendoza filed his civil suit that charges were brought against him, with prosecutors claiming that he had exaggerated the severity of the beating he suffered. The prosecution of Mendoza is an attack on transit and city workers as a whole, as was made clear by Police Superintendent Jody Weis, who applauded the charges for sending "a powerful message to anyone attempting to cheat the criminal justice system, especially public employees." Labor must demand: Drop the charges now!

The unions representing Chicago transit workers—including ATU Locals 241 and 308 (which represents rail workers)—have a long and proud history of action in defense of their members against police repression. In 1985, bus driver David Johnson was shackled to his hospital bed when then-state's attorney, now-mayor Richard Daley pressed for frame-up felony charges against him for a tragic and unavoidable accident when a carload of youths cut off the bus he was driving on Lake Shore Drive. Over 700 outraged transit workers marched in the streets outside police headquarters, forcing Daley to drop the charges.

In 1987, seven racist cops savagely beat and kicked black bus driver Cassandra Seay and her mother Callie Bryant in their home, sending Seay to the hospital for over a week. When the cops pressed trumped-up charges, including assaulting an officer, the ATU locals turned out in force and overflowed the courtrooms at Seay's trial, and she was ultimately acquitted. In 2002 and 2003, there was a rash of cop attacks against bus drivers, including Arlene Russell, who faced bogus charges of battery after she tried to call the Office of Professional Standards to report a cop who called her a "stupid black bitch." Both ATU locals went on record in Russell's defense and, after drivers in uniform turned out in force for her court dates, the charges were dropped.

It is important that ATU Local 241 stood behind Mendoza—and it must continue to support him. A union motion passed on October 5—before he was arrested—is available on the Local's Web site. It solicits statements of solidarity from labor, community and civil rights organizations. It also calls for "the police officer who attacked our brother to be promptly prosecuted, as would any other person under the law." On the part of transit workers, this sentiment is understandable. But the reality is that prosecutions of cops, including those who commit such heinous crimes as the 1999 killing of Amadou Diallo in NYC in a hail of 41 bullets, almost always fail, because by the standards of bourgeois legality the officers are just doing the job they are paid to do in racist capitalist America. The cops, the prosecutors who frame their victims and the courts that put the stamp of legal approval on police brutality are part of the capitalist state that exists to protect the rule and profits of the exploiting capitalist class.

WV Photo

ATU militants led successful defense of Chicago bus driver Cassandra Seay (center) against 1987 cop frame-up.

To the detriment of the union and its members, the pro-capitalist ATU tops make a practice of fostering illusions in the courts and cops of the capitalist state. At a press conference in front of police headquarters after Mendoza's arrest, Local 241 president Jefferson called on "Jody Weis and Mayor Richard Daley to intervene and to protect the rights of Mr. Mendoza." The cops who beat and are now terrorizing Mendoza work for Mayor Daley, whose capitalist Democratic Party machine has overseen cop terror in "Segregation City" for the better part of the last century. The labor movement must rely on its own power, not the forces of bourgeois "law and order."

The assault on Mendoza and his subsequent arrest come amid all-sided attacks on the ATU and other transit unions by the Daley machine. The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) is threatening to rip up the ATU's contract in February and lay off close to 2,000 union members, almost 20 percent of the workforce, unless the workers agree to unpaid furloughs and pay cuts. The CTA also intends to slash service on two-thirds of its bus routes. A display of union muscle protesting the vendetta against Mendoza would give the cops pause before they again beat on a bus driver, and it could help prepare the way for the kind of struggle needed to turn back the layoffs and service cuts.

Out of the fight to defend Cassandra Seay in 1987-88, the Labor Black Struggle League was founded in Chicago. In 2002-03 the LBSL, which is based on a class-struggle program and is fraternally allied with the Spartacist League, was also active in mobilizing to defend Arlene Russell and other drivers facing bogus charges, writing in its newsletter:

> "In this climate, the racist cops think they have a green light to run over the rights of, and brutalize, anyone unfortunate enough to cross their path.... There will be no end to police brutality except through socialist revolution. What we desperately need is a militant, multiracial workers party to fight for the rights of all the oppressed and to fight for a workers government."

The Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, wrote a November 16 letter protesting the cop vendetta. ATU Local 241 is calling for resolutions of support for brother Mendoza. Statements can be sent to: Anita Alvarez, Cook County State's Attorney, 69 W. Washington St., Suite 3200, Chicago, IL 60602. Fax: (312) 603-4708. Copies should also be forwarded to Local 241. ■

Critical Notes...

(continued from page 6)

revealed to be exactly that" (*The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* [1996]). To be sure, Huntington agreed with Fukuyama that there would never again be powerful states or an international political movement having mass support that claimed to represent a *universal* alternative such as communism to Western-type capitalism and "democracy." But he maintained that much of the world—in particular Russia, the Islamic East and China—would be dominated by anti-Western governments and political movements based on national and religio-cultural values and traditions:

> "In this new world the most pervasive, important, and dangerous conflicts will not be between social classes, rich and poor, or other economically defined groups, but between peoples belonging to different cultural entities....
>
> "The West is and will remain for years to come the most powerful civilization. Yet its power relative to that of other civilizations is declining. As the West attempts to assert its values and to protect its interests, non-Western societies confront a choice. Some attempt to emulate the West and to join or to 'bandwagon' with the West. Other Confucian and Islamic societies attempt to expand their own economic and military power to resist and to 'balance' against the West. A central axis of post-Cold War world politics is thus the interaction of Western power and culture with the power and culture of non-Western civilizations."

The Huntington/Fukuyama debate underscores the need for us to differentiate between belief in the "death of communism," which is pervasive and still current, and the limited and short-lived American imperialist triumphalism in the immediate aftermath of the fall of the Soviet Union.

Brief Concluding Thoughts

A very important question confronting us can be formulated in this way: is it possible that a spontaneous upheaval, involving a substantial section of the working class, against a right-wing government can lead to a prerevolutionary and even a revolutionary situation (i.e., organs of dual power) even though the mass of workers and other toilers involved do *not* aspire to socialism? I think the answer is yes. While we have not experienced such a development, we should not rule it out. For now, our primary task is to propagate a Marxist worldview with the expectation of recruiting relatively small numbers of leftist intellectuals and advanced workers. To paraphrase John Maynard Keynes: when the facts change, so will our perspectives. ■

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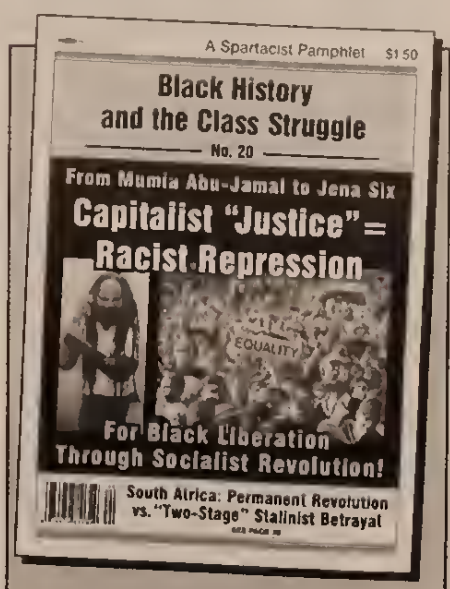

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Drugs...

(continued from page 12)

The most celebrated provision is the "judicial diversion" option given judges to prescribe "treatment" in lieu of prison, provided the accused first pleads guilty and the judge doesn't consider incarceration necessary to "protect the public." While these drug treatment programs allow for the release of some prisoners from the dungeons of New York State, these programs are mandatory. A perceived violation of the treatment program's stipulations will land a person back into prison, which makes this program an extension of the state's parole system.

At the same time, the law restores mandatory 15-to-life sentences (eliminated in 2005) for anyone who sells drugs worth $75,000 in a six-month period, and adds for the first time a mandatory two-to-nine-year sentence for anyone over 21 who sells any outlawed substance (including marijuana) in any quantity to someone under 17. Paterson also made it clear that only a small number of those imprisoned under the Rockefeller laws will be eligible for early release—1,500 at most.

The oppression of black people is a key prop of American capitalist rule. Blacks in the U.S. are an oppressed race-color caste integrated into the American capitalist economy while overwhelmingly segregated at the bottom of American society—the last hired and first fired. Fueling the mass incarceration of blacks has been the deindustrialization of the U.S. In the mid 1960s, manufacturing, with its large component of black workers, employed 24 percent of the labor force. By the early 2000s, this was reduced to only 11 percent, and the number keeps falling. The loss of unionized industrial jobs has devastated cities across the Midwest and Northeast, while the pro-capitalist union tops have caved in to one attack after another and one austerity measure after another by the bosses. Deeply racist at their core, the rulers' anti-drug laws have also been used to discipline and fire union militants and intimidate workers more widely.

Whittaker/NY Times

Converted gymnasium in overcrowded California State Prison in Sacramento. The "war on drugs" has condemned millions to prison hell.

In the calculations of the American bourgeoisie, the urban ghettos, which used to provide a reservoir of unskilled labor for the auto plants and steel mills, are simply written off as an expendable population. Unable to provide jobs from which they can extract profit, the capitalists see no reason to spend on education, food or shelter for the impoverished ghetto masses—only prisons. And for many black and Latino youth in the ghettos and barrios, the only jobs on the horizon are in the illegal economy of the drug trade.

Accompanying all this was the whipping up of hysteria that demonized the ghettoized poor black population as criminal "superpredators." The plethora of drug laws was an outgrowth of the web of legal repression under the "war on crime"—launched by Republican president Richard Nixon—which the American capitalist government implemented to target black militants and the ghetto poor following the ghetto upheavals of the mid-to-late 1960s. The American ruling class strategy for reinforcing and stabilizing its political control was recorded by Nixon's chief of staff H. R. Haldeman, who wrote in his diary: President Nixon "emphasized that you have to face the fact that the whole problem is really the blacks. The key is to devise a system that recognizes this while not appearing to" (quoted in Christian Parenti, *Lockdown America: Police and Prisons in the Age of Crisis* [2000]).

The "war on drugs," launched by Republican president Ronald Reagan in the early 1980s, was a bipartisan attack among whose most vociferous supporters were black Democrats and hustlers like Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton. During the Clinton presidency, 673,000 people were sent to prison, surpassing the total under both Reagan and Bush Sr.

From its inception, we denounced the "war on drugs" as a war on black people. Although it was liberal Republican governor Rockefeller who led the charge in New York State, it was liberal Democratic Party governor Mario Cuomo who added more prison beds in New York than all the previous governors in the state's history combined. Obscenely, Cuomo got the $7 billion to build these prisons from funds out of the state's Urban Development Corporation. This policy of draining Urban Development for building prisons gave new meaning to the old adage that urban renewal meant black removal.

In partly eliminating mandatory sentencing, Paterson's law may help decelerate but won't stop the disparate imprisonment of blacks, which is systemic in American capitalism. The courts are as much a part of the capitalist state, which exists to protect the class rule and property of the capitalist rulers, as the cops who brutalize ghetto youth on the streets and prosecutors who frame them up. As black comedian Richard Pryor observed about the prisons before the implementation of these mandatory sentencing schemes, "Go in there looking for justice, and that's all you find—just us." This will continue to be the grim reality for black people and minorities in America until the racist capitalist system is shattered through proletarian socialist revolution.■

Jet

Admitted FBI fink Al Sharpton marking crack house in 1986. Sharpton's "anti-drug" campaign fed into rulers' racist "war on drugs."

Harrison...

(continued from page 12)

experiences with the West Sacramento cops. But the frame-up was so blatant that Jason Ruffin was acquitted at his retrial in October. The cops and prosecution were gunning to convict Harrison.

The racism and union-busting that are integral to the "anti-terror" laws were played out in the courtroom. The one black person in the jury pool for Harrison's trial was excluded by the prosecutor, who later justified his pre-emptory dismissal on the grounds that the woman was "too emotional" in her description of the humiliating treatment she and her family had received at the hands of the cops. At the sentencing hearing on December 8, the prosecution objected to any statement that race had anything to do with the cops' assault on Harrison and Ruffin.

To be a young black man in racist America is to be branded as a criminal, a verdict reinforced by the wholesale roundup and imprisonment of young black, and also Latino, men under the racist "war on drugs." Now, under the provisions of the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program, port workers are branded as a "threat to national security" for offenses ranging from drug possession with intent to distribute, to fraud, to being an "illegal immigrant." With the implementation of TWIC, tens of thousands of port workers have lost their jobs. Disproportionately, these are black and Latino workers as well as the largely immigrant port truckers.

That Harrison and Ruffin stood firm in the face of this relentless and vindictive prosecution is a statement of their commitment to defending their union and themselves against being branded as criminals. They stood on the front lines in defense of the ILWU and other port workers who are lined up in the crosshairs of the "port security" laws. Dripping with venom toward the union, the prosecution tried to argue that Harrison had been pressured by the "militant wing" of the ILWU to fight the frame-up charges. Pointing to the two rallies organized by ILWU Local 10 and other unionists in defense of Harrison and Ruffin during their preliminary hearings, the prosecution all but declared the union's defense actions as some kind of mafia-style conspiracy to influence the jury. In fact, such mobilizations on behalf of victimized workers are part of the historic traditions of the labor movement.

The only conspiracy here was the standard one of the American "justice" system between the prosecution, the judge and the cops. There was not a shred of evidence that Harrison resisted or obstructed the police. As his lawyer pointed out, Harrison at no time objected, complained or otherwise reacted to being assaulted with pepper spray, which required paramedics being immediately called to treat him, or to having his shoulder so injured by the cops that he was off work for two months. The judge charged that the jury would have to find Harrison guilty if they believed he hadn't immediately done what the police told him to. During sentencing, the prosecution—echoed by the judge—invented a new "crime," the "crime of obstinacy." The ominous message, not a new one in capitalist America, is that a cop's word *is* "the law," giving the thugs in blue free rein to criminalize anyone who doesn't obey.

This was exactly the line of the cops who arrested black scholar Henry Louis Gates last summer and charged him with disorderly conduct when he refused a cop's order to get out of his own home! But while the charges against this eminent black professor were eventually dismissed, such was not the case for a black longshore worker.

At the December 6 Partisan Defense Committee Holiday Appeal benefit in Oakland in solidarity with class-war prisoners, the speaker from the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense underlined the importance of the Harrison and Ruffin case:

> "The government's 'war on terror' has long had the ILWU in its sights. The prosecution of Harrison and Ruffin demonstrates the bipartisan 'war on terror' to be a union-busting war on blacks and labor as well as immigrants. It also exposes the treacherous support by the ILWU tops for the maritime security measures that allow the government to ride roughshod over and fire dock workers. ***Down with the maritime security measures!***"

Echoing the capitalist Democratic Party that they slavishly support, the ILWU misleaders criminally joined in the chorus for increased "port security." In March, the ILWU International even issued a statement calling for more "staffing and resources to properly administer the TWIC program." Last summer, ***after*** countless longshore workers had already lost their jobs to "port security," the ILWU Longshore Division Caucus voted to "seek the abandonment of the TWIC program." But this too came cloaked in "national security" patriotism, with arguments that TWIC "does not actually improve port security" and "improperly inserts the employers (many of them foreign) into a United States government program" (*Dispatcher*, July/August 2009). For years, the ILWU and Teamsters bureaucrats have pointed to the overwhelmingly immigrant, non-union port truckers as the real "security threat" at the ports. This is not only an outrageous attack on the port truckers but on the very existence of the ILWU, reinforcing its increased isolation as the last bastion of union power on the West Coast docks.

For the ILWU and other longshore unions to wage a real fight against TWIC and the racist, union-busting "war on terror" laws, the starting point must be opposition to the very state that is enforcing these laws, now with Barack Obama as Commander-in-Chief. This means championing full citizenship rights for all immigrants and fighting to organize foreign-born workers, like the port truckers, many of whom bring lessons of militant class struggle from their countries of origin. As the persecution of Harrison and Ruffin underlines, this also means championing the fight for black freedom, which is itself directly linked to the fight to sweep away capitalist wage slavery and the state forces and laws that maintain it.

But to wage that kind of struggle means breaking with the class-collaborationist policies of the union misleaders which increasingly subordinate the unions to the capitalist state and forging a new leadership rooted in the program of class struggle. Down with the "war on terror"! Break with the Democrats! For a revolutionary internationalist workers party that fights for a workers government!■

WORKERS VANGUARD

New York Tinkers with Rockefeller Laws

Down With the Racist "War on Drugs"!

For the Decriminalization of Drugs!

January 26 marks 31 years since the death of Nelson Rockefeller, longtime New York governor. Many recall that this famous scion of the family whose name is synonymous with capitalist greed died of a heart attack while having sex with his 27-year-old mistress. Rockefeller, who ordered the killing of prisoners during the 1971 Attica prison revolt, is more widely remembered as the architect of New York's draconian drug laws. Enacted in 1973, these laws mandated that possession of small amounts of cocaine or heroin be punished with minimum sentences of 15 years to life in prison—even for those with no prior record.

As a result of these laws, some 200,000 men, women and children were condemned to decades of prison hell. Today, nearly 90 percent of those incarcerated in New York on drug charges are black or Latino. The Rockefeller laws became a model for drug laws across the country that imprisoned hundreds of thousands more in the racist "war on drugs." The number of incarcerated in the U.S. has grown eightfold since 1970, with 2.3 million behind bars today—70 percent of them black or Latino.

In April 2009, New York governor David Paterson signed into law modifications to New York's drug laws (which had earlier been "reformed" in 2005), doing away with some mandatory sentences and allowing judges to order treatment as an alternative to prison in some cases. These new laws reflect a trend in a wing of the bourgeoisie that sees the constant expansion and maintenance of the vast complex of prisons as too costly. Among them is former New York State Senator John Dunne, who was a sponsor of the Rockefeller laws. Dunne declared that these laws were a failure that "handcuffed our judges" and "filled our prisons to dangerously overcrowded conditions." Also among them is General Barry McCaffrey, a war criminal who in 1991 ordered the slaughter of retreating Iraqi troops during the first Persian Gulf War. In 1999, when he was President Clinton's drug czar, he stated: "We can't incarcerate our way out of [the drug] problem." Last May, President Obama's drug czar, R. Gil Kerlikowske, told the *Wall Street Journal* that it was time to shelve the phrase "war on drugs." "Regardless of how you try to explain to people it's a 'war on drugs'...people see a war as a war on them."

Andrew Lichtenstein

Protest against the Rockefeller drug laws, New York City, June 2003.

As a 2009 report by the New York Civil Liberties Union put it, the Rockefeller laws are "New York's Jim Crow Laws." In the 1950s, when Jim Crow segregation was still legal in the South, black people made up 30 percent of the national prison population. Today, as a result of the "war on drugs," blacks, though only 13 percent of the U.S. population, make up over 50 percent of prison inmates, eight times the rate of imprisonment for whites. According to a 2007 Justice Policy Institute report, black men are sent to prison on drug charges at ten times the rate of white men, even though their drug use is approximately the same.

Between 1994 and 2003 the average time served by blacks for drug crimes grew by 62 percent, compared to 17 percent for whites. On average, black men and women spend nearly as much time in prison on drug charges as whites convicted of violent crimes. The federal drug laws for crack and cocaine possession are blatantly racist—punishments for possession of crack are far more severe than those for powder cocaine. Crack is the cheaper version of the same substance cocaine is derived from, and is therefore used as a substitute for cocaine in the ghettos.

We are in favor of any alleviation of Rockefeller and other drug laws. We recognize that such reforms certainly mean a lot to those few already behind bars who will gain earlier release and to others who will be spared a lengthy prison term for something that should not be considered a crime in the first place. But no amount of tinkering will change the reactionary nature of these laws or their racist enforcement by the cops, prosecutors and courts of the capitalist state. The Spartacist League calls for the *decriminalization of drugs*. Drug use is a private, individual matter. For those who wish, any associated psychological or medical problem that may arise from their use should be treated by qualified medical personnel; in other words, it should be a medical issue, not a criminal one involving the police, prisons and courts. By taking the profit out of the drug trade, decriminalization would also reduce the crime and other social pathology associated with it. We oppose all laws against "crimes without victims"—such as drug use, prostitution, gambling and pornography—which are at bottom designed to maintain social control. All laws such as the Rockefeller drug laws should be completely abolished!

When Paterson signed the new drug laws, anti-drug-law activists declared that the "Rock has been dropped," as if the Rockefeller laws had been repealed. Paterson's law eliminates mandatory sentences for most—but not all—first-time drug offenses and many second-time ones.

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Protest Conviction of Aaron Harrison!

"War on Terror" Frame-Up of Black Longshoreman

In a blow against unions, blacks, immigrants and all those targeted by the government's "war on terror," Bay Area black longshoreman Aaron Harrison was found guilty on November 16 on frame-up charges of obstructing a police officer. Harrison was sentenced to one year's probation, slapped with a fine and 30 days of a work project (like highway cleanup), community service or home detention.

In August 2007, Harrison and fellow black longshoreman Jason Ruffin were driving back into work at the Stevedoring Services of America terminal in Sacramento after a lunch break. They were stopped by port security guards demanding to search their car, citing the maritime security regulations that are part of the government's "anti-terror" laws. They had never been confronted with such a demand before in the Bay Area ports where they normally work. Harrison called the business agent from International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 for advice. Enraged that these young black men had the temerity to call their union, the security guards called in cops from the notoriously racist West Sacramento police. They pepper-sprayed Harrison in the face, forced the two longshoremen from their car, handcuffed them and threw them in jail on charges of resisting or obstructing a police officer and trespassing (the latter charge was later dropped).

The relentless prosecution of Harrison and Ruffin demonstrates the lengths to which the government will go to enforce its "port security" laws, which have massively strengthened the state's police powers on the docks. When the first trial of the two Local 10 longshoremen ended in a hung jury last January, the court separated their cases. The prosecutors tried to weed out from the jury anyone with pro-union sympathies or anyone with negative

WV Photo

Aaron Harrison at October 2007 protest against his arrest and that of co-defendant Jason Ruffin.

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 950 GCU C-701 15 January 2010

AP photos

Iran in Turmoil

For a Leninist-Trotskyist Party to Fight for Workers Revolution!

Tehran, December 27: Iranian cops en route to attack anti-government protest (left). Protesters erecting a road block (right).

JANUARY 11—Since last June's re-election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, which was riddled with fraud, Iran has been gripped with protests and attendant government repression. Amid this turmoil, the Obama administration, while preparing a new round of sanctions aimed at strangling the Iranian economy, continues to ratchet up its threats of military action against Iran's nuclear program. An article in the *New York Times* (6 January), based largely on information provided by Washington officials, reported that Iran has shielded "an increasingly large part of its atomic complex in networks of tunnels and bunkers" that, in the words of Israeli defense minister Ehud Barak, "cannot be destroyed through a conventional attack."

The *Times* revealed that the Pentagon "is racing to develop a deadly tunnel weapon" scheduled for deployment next summer. The 20-foot-long bomb, called the Massive Ordnance Penetrator, will pack tons of explosives—ten times more than its predecessor—and be designed for launch from the B-2 stealth bomber. Against such threats, the international proletariat must defend the development of nuclear weapons by Iran and demand: Imperialist hands off!

Imperialist Hands Off!

Within Iran, protests, some mobilizing tens of thousands of people, have re-erupted since early December. Under a brutal crackdown by security forces, last summer's wave of demonstrations was reduced during the fall to fewer than one major protest per month, often timed to coincide with religious occasions. Then, on December 7, tens of thousands of students rallied in Tehran and at universities around the country, clashing with riot police and Basij militias.

While the protest demonstrations have been politically subordinate to one side in what is essentially a falling-out between rival factions within the ruling clerical elite, the December 7 student demonstrations pointed to the politically heterogeneous nature of the opposition. Mir Hussein Moussavi, the main opposition candidate in the June presidential election, did not associate himself with the student demonstrations. Reportedly, few of the young protesters wore the signature green color of Moussavi's campaign, and some even burned pictures of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, a taboo-defying act in a country where the "supreme leader" is considered to be answerable only to God.

The student demonstrations were followed by a series of mass protests coinciding with religious occasions. On December 27, at least eight people (including Moussavi's nephew) were shot and killed by security forces at mass demonstrations in Tehran and other cities coinciding with the Shi'ite holy day of Ashura.

As many as 2,000 people have reportedly been arrested since the start of the latest wave of demonstrations. Five of those arrested are accused of being members of the Mujahedin Khalq, an Iranian opposition group that until recently operated out of bases in Iraq; they face charges of *Moharebeh*, or waging war against God, which carries an automatic death sentence. The international workers movement must demand: Free all anti-government protesters!

Those arrested include 12 members of the Baha'i religious minority, bringing to 48 the number of Baha'is currently imprisoned in Iran. Seven Baha'i leaders, due to face trial tomorrow, have been hit with new criminal charges that carry a possible death penalty. According to the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, more than 200 Baha'is have died at the hands of the Islamic Republic of Iran, while thousands have been fired from their jobs, had their property confiscated or been arrested.

In another sign of the stepped-up repression, a Kurdish political prisoner, Fasih Yasamani, was executed by hanging on January 6. Previously, another Kurdish prisoner was executed in November, and at least 17 other activists remain on death row. Yasamani was accused, on the basis of a "confession" obtained under torture, of being a member of the Party for Free Life in Kurdistan (PJAK), which is closely associated with the nationalist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in Turkey. When Barack Obama took office last year, one of his first acts was to brand the PJAK a terrorist organization, underlining, yet again, that the imperialist rulers who threaten war against Iran are deadly enemies of those oppressed by the Iranian regime.

We print below, edited for publication, a 3 October 2009 forum given in Toronto by John Masters, member of the Central Committee of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste, Canadian section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

* * *

Since the re-election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in a blatantly fraudulent vote last June, Iran has been swept by wave after wave of protests. Hundreds of thousands of student youth, women and workers have taken to the streets. Despite severe repression including beatings, murders and mass imprisonments, the protests have continued, the most sustained social upheaval the country has seen in the 30 years since the "Islamic revolution" of 1978-79.

That "revolution," which I'll talk about in some depth tonight, marked a watershed not only for Iran but for the whole Near East and the historically Muslim world. Millions rose up against the bloody Shah, a savage despot who had been placed in power by the CIA 25 years earlier. But the aspirations for social liberation of Iran's workers, women and oppressed minorities, like the Kurds, were

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U.S. Navy

Ships of U.S. 5th Fleet on patrol in Persian Gulf, November 2009.

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On Matthias Rath and Deadly HIV Denialism

Gideon Mendel

HIV patients at Palmerton Clinic, Eastern Cape, 2004.

28 December 2009

Dear Comrades,

The Spartacist League/Britain's fine statement in defense of Simon Singh (*WV* No. 949 [1 January]) made reference to the notorious Matthias Rath. As documented by journalist Anso Thom, Rath brought his vitamin quackery to South Africa in 2004 with deadly results. Thom's account appears in a collection of essays published in South Africa under the title *The Virus, Vitamins and Vegetables: The South African HIV/AIDS mystery*. This book details the intimate connections between the Tripartite Alliance government of former president Thabo Mbeki and a variety of international and homegrown quacks who denied that HIV causes AIDS. A Harvard School of Public Health study showed that 330,000 South Africans died of AIDS between 2000 and 2005 because a timely antiretroviral (ARV) treatment program was not implemented. Indeed, such was actively blocked by the ANC/SACP/COSATU government while merchants of death pushing herbal and "natural" cures were promoted.

According to Thom, Matthias Rath made millions selling "micronutrient" pills to cancer and heart disease sufferers in countries like the U.S., the UK and Germany. In 2004 his foundation set up shop in Cape Town with the help of local homeopath Anthony Rees. After finding that there wasn't much of a market for his cancer and heart disease quackery, Rath hooked up with HIV-denialist Anthony Brink. The Rath foundation proceeded to lay siege to one of the first programs in South Africa for distribution of ARVs run by Médecins Sans Frontières in the black township of Khayelitsha. Rath's foundation not only publicized that ARVs were toxic and handed out his supplements as a cure for AIDS, but also claimed to be conducting clinical trials. Victims of Rath's quackery told of being offered groceries and money to take Rath's supplements instead of ARVs.

Rath and Brink simultaneously waged a campaign of defamation against the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), which had led the campaign against the Mbeki government's HIV-denialism and for free ARVs. Brink attempted to have TAC founder Zackie Achmat indicted for genocide at the international criminal court in the Hague because he was supposedly promoting the interests of big pharmaceutical companies! It was not until the TAC and others secured a court order preventing Rath from conducting any further unauthorized clinical trials that he fled South Africa. Nonetheless, the South African Traditional Healers Organisation continues to distribute Rath's propaganda against ARVs.

In the U.S., "alternative medicine" is quite trendy among petty-bourgeois types, some of whom believe they are tapping into "natural" and ancient health care wisdom that the greedy pharmaceutical companies and medical establishment want to suppress. Those who have the privilege of dabbling in such quackery without serious harm to their health (or wallet) might ponder the plight of millions in countries like South Africa who die entirely preventable deaths while resorting to such "natural" remedies. Lacking even basic sanitation or clean water, many have little choice but to turn to traditional healers who believe that bewitching is the cause of illness. Considering the hellholes called public hospitals in South Africa, it is no wonder that even those with some access to scientific medicine find more comfort in the care of a witch doctor. Faced with the early stages of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the Mbeki government decided to make a virtue of this terrible scarcity and backwardness rather than marshalling whatever resources they could to get and provide ARVs, demonstrating yet again how very cheap black life remains for the capitalist rulers of neo-apartheid South Africa.

A more far-sighted capitalist government in the neo-colonial world was that of Brazil, which beginning in 1996 produced generic ARVs and provided these for free. While the Brazilian government now boasts of having saved billions of dollars, we as Marxists are not indifferent to the fact that tens of thousands are still alive thanks to this program, and that many more have avoided infection due to the government's education campaigns. This is why our South African comrades call for free ARVs for all who need them as part of the struggle for free, quality health care for all.

Despite an official shift in the posture of the Tripartite Alliance government on AIDS, reflected in a World AIDS Day speech by president Jacob Zuma earlier this month, there are still millions who cannot access treatment because the government has not provided enough money to the public health system. The Young Communist League (YCL) recently called for Mbeki to be tried for genocide for his role in blocking AIDS treatment. The YCL is of course silent about the role of bourgeois-populist Jacob Zuma, who as Mbeki's deputy president publicly derided ARVs and promoted natural cures at a government HIV/AIDS candle-lighting ceremony in 2002. The YCL also conveniently ignores that its parent organization, the SACP, remained a part of the very government it now accuses of genocide. But one shouldn't expect too many scruples from these pro-capitalist SACP misleaders who have long shackled the working class by tying it to capitalist exploiters through the SACP/COSATU alliance with the bourgeois ANC.

Comradely,
Rosemary

In Defense of Science

TROTSKY

LENIN

The reactionary climate of the post-Soviet world has provided a breeding ground for mysticism, superstition, political and social backwardness and all manner of anti-scientific quackery. In a 1925 speech before the Mendeleyev Congress, which took place amid celebrations of the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky underlined the significance of scientific knowledge for mastering nature, differentiating between natural and social science in bourgeois society. Against those who claimed that the "essence" of reality cannot be learned, Trotsky reasserted the basic materialist concept that the objective world is knowable.

Socialist society, in its relation to scientific and cultural inheritance in general, holds to a far lesser degree an attitude of indifference, or passive acceptance. It can be said that the greater the trust of socialism in sciences devoted to direct study of nature, the greater is its critical distrust in approaching those sciences and pseudo-sciences which are linked closely to the structure of human society, its economic institutions, its state, laws, ethics, etc. Of course, these two spheres are not separated by an impenetrable wall. But at the same time, it is an indisputable fact that the heritage embodied in those sciences which deal not with human society but with "matter"—in natural sciences in the broad sense of the term, and consequently of course in chemistry—is of incomparably greater weight.

The need to know nature is imposed upon men by their need to subordinate nature to themselves. Any digressions in this sphere from objective relationships, which are determined by the properties of matter itself, are corrected by practical experience. This alone seriously guarantees natural sciences, chemical research in particular, from intentional, unintentional, or semideliberate distortions, misinterpretations, and falsifications. Social research primarily devoted its efforts toward justifying historically arisen society, so as to preserve it against the attacks of "destructive theories," etc. Herein is rooted the apologetic role of the official social sciences of bourgeois society; and this is the reason why their accomplishments are of little value.

So long as science as a whole remained a "handmaiden of theology," it could produce valuable results only surreptitiously. This was the case in the Middle Ages. It was during the bourgeois regime, as already pointed out, that the natural sciences gained the possibility of wide development. But social science remained the servant of capitalism....

It is self-evident that if there are no limits to knowledge and mastery of matter, then there is no unknowable "essence."

Knowledge that arms us with the ability to forecast all possible changes in matter, and endows us with the necessary power of producing these changes—such knowledge does in fact exhaust the essence of matter. The so-called unknowable "essence" is only a generalization of our inadequate knowledge about matter. It is a pseudonym for our ignorance. Dualistic demarcation of unknown matter from its known properties reminds me of the jocular definition of a gold ring as a hole surrounded by precious metal. It is obvious that if we gain knowledge of the precious metal of phenomena and are able to shape it, then we can remain completely indifferent to the "hole" of the substance; and we gladly make a present of it to the archaic philosophers and theologians.

—Leon Trotsky, "Dialectical Materialism and Science" (1925)

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Helped Expose Frame-Up of Mumia Abu-Jamal

In Honor of Veronica Jones

Pan-African News Wire

Veronica Jones, who courageously came forward with evidence of the innocence of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, died in early December at the age of 48. Jones was an eyewitness at the scene of the December 1981 killing of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner, for which Mumia was falsely accused and sent to death row. At Mumia's 1982 trial, Jones, under pressure from the police, denied her original eyewitness account that she had seen two men run from the scene of the shooting. Neither of these could have been Mumia, who was found sitting on the ground profusely bleeding from a shot from a policeman's gun. At a 1996 post-conviction relief (PCRA) hearing for Mumia in front of "hanging judge" Albert Sabo, who had presided over the 1982 frame-up trial, Jones fought off relentless harassment from Sabo and the prosecution and stuck by her original eyewitness account. In a fury, the court had Jones ***arrested on the witness stand*** and dragged off to jail on the basis of a bench warrant issued more than two years before.

The victimization of Veronica Jones was one glaring example of the lengths to which the courts, cops and prosecutors have gone to see Mumia dead or imprisoned for life. The capitalist state's frame-up machinery included cover-ups, the disappearance of evidence exonerating Mumia and the manufacture of such fake "evidence" as a purported confession uttered by Mumia as he lay near death shortly after the shooting—a tale that was concocted by prosecutors and cops two months later.

Since we first took up Mumia's defense in 1987, the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee—a class-struggle legal and social defense organization associated with the SL—have stressed that Mumia was a man marked by America's capitalist rulers because of his political views and especially because he is a black man who stood up to the racist oppressors. The cops and FBI had Mumia in their crosshairs from the time he was a leading activist in the Philadelphia Black Panther Party at the age of 15. They continued with their vendetta when Mumia became a popular radio and print journalist, known as the "voice of the voiceless" for his scathing exposés of cop terror, black oppression and the plight of the poor. He was then targeted for sympathizing with the MOVE organization when it was subjected to a murderous cop siege in 1978, which was followed by the infamous May 1985 bombing of the MOVE home, in which an entire black neighborhood was burned to the ground. When Faulkner was shot and Mumia—at the time a cab driver working in the area—was found on the scene, the cops saw an opportunity to silence him forever.

Veronica Jones was one of many witnesses coerced by the police into changing their testimony. Jones, who had been working as a prostitute, was in jail when two detectives visited her only days before Mumia's trial and threatened her with a long prison sentence on gun possession charges if she did not change her original account. Fearing that she would be separated for years from her three children, Jones relented. Nevertheless, she testified at the trial that weeks after the shooting, police hauled her in and offered a deal similar to one they gave to Cynthia White. Also a prostitute, White, the prosecution's star witness, was the only one claiming to have seen Mumia with a gun in his hand, even though no other eyewitness recalled seeing her in the area at the time. At the 1982 trial, Jones testified: "They were trying to get me to say something that the other girl said...and they told us we can work the area if we tell them." Sabo had this testimony struck from the record.

In 1996, as she was threatened with arrest, Jones defiantly told Sabo's court: "You think that's going to make me change my story. It's not!" Returning to the hearing after her release from jail, Jones demonstratively sat with Mumia's supporters. Asked why she had come forward, Jones replied that she did not want her grandchildren to "think their grandmom was living a lie." She subsequently became a visible supporter of the fight to free Mumia. In November 2007, she wrote a protest letter to the NBC *Today* show, which was preparing a broadcast featuring Michael Smerconish and Maureen Faulkner, authors of a lying tract titled *Murdered by Mumia*. Declaring that "I Veronica Jones firmly believe in my heart that Mumia Abu-Jamal is innocent," she wrote, "What makes you any different from those that had me ripped off the witness stand in handcuffs and arrested (all in front of my children) in a Philadelphia courtroom back in October 1996 on some bogus charge—all because I came forward to tell the truth."

After Jones' 1996 testimony, others came forward, confirming a massive operation of police coercion. In 1997, Pamela Jenkins, another prostitute, revealed that police had tried to force her into falsely asserting that she saw Mumia shoot Faulkner, despite the fact that she was not even at the scene of the shooting. Jenkins also testified that White had been a police informer and was threatened by the cops into perjuring herself at the 1982 trial. A 2002 sworn statement by Yvette Williams, who was in jail with Cynthia White, also stated that White was threatened by the police.

Jones' testimony added to the accounts of a number of other witnesses who said that they saw one or two black men flee the scene right after Faulkner was shot—a fact that the state did everything possible to disappear. Notably, her testimony corresponds with the subsequent confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Faulkner. In a sworn 1999 affidavit, Beverly stated that he and another man had been hired to kill Faulkner, who "was a problem for the mob and corrupt policemen because he interfered with the graft and payoffs made to allow illegal activity" such as prostitution, gambling and drugs. (Beverly's affidavit, Mumia's own declaration of innocence and other material are included in the 2006 PDC pamphlet, *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia Is Innocent!*)

Outrageously, Mumia's lead attorney at the time, Leonard Weinglass, refused to present this explosive proof of his client's innocence in court. This compelled Rachel Wolkenstein and Jonathan Piper, who are associated with the PDC, to resign from Mumia's defense team. Weinglass and co-counsel Dan Williams were fired by Mumia in 2001 after the publication of Williams' treacherous "insider's account" of the case, *Executing Justice*, which was written as a preemptive strike to discredit the Beverly evidence. Since that time, court after court has refused to consider the Beverly confession and other evidence of Mumia's innocence.

As Mumia pointed out in a 4 October 1996 column on Jones' arrest on the witness stand, "The courts are *their* courts—places where, as Judge Sabo so aptly put it, 'Justice is just an emotional feeling'." Sabo made this snide comment during Mumia's 1995 PCRA hearings, when he ruled against virtually every defense motion and objection and even had attorney Rachel Wolkenstein briefly thrown in jail.

Today, as Mumia nears the end of his legal appeals, the forces of the capitalist state continue their vendetta against him. Last April, the U.S. Supreme Court turned down Mumia's petition to overturn his frame-up conviction while holding in abeyance the prosecutors' arguments to reinstate the death sentence, which had been overturned in 2001 by U.S. District Court judge William Yohn on the grounds of faulty jury instructions. Pennsylvania prosecutors are focused on an imminent Supreme Court ruling in the case of Ohio neo-Nazi Frank Spisak. Sentenced to death in 1983 for a killing spree at Cleveland State University, Spisak had that sentence overturned in 2006, because of faulty instructions to the jury that were strikingly similar to those issued at Mumia's 1982 sentencing hearing. Nineteen state attorneys general, including Pennsylvania's, filed a friend-of-the-court brief that seeks the reinstatement of Spisak's death sentence and explicitly links his case with that of Mumia.

A ruling against Spisak would mark a huge step toward reimposing the death sentence for Mumia. But even if the Court rules for Spisak and Mumia's death sentence remains reversed, Mumia's case would go back to the Philadelphia DA's office for a decision on whether to seek a new death sentence via a "trial" on the sentencing issue. Helping to prepare such an outcome is a film by black Republican Tigre Hill due to be released, titled *Barrel of a Gun*, which regurgitates the prosecutors' lying claim that Mumia had been itching to kill a cop since his teenage years in the Black Panthers.

There is no justice in the capitolist courts! This basic truth was spurned long ago by reformist "socialists" and assorted radical activists who subordinated the fight for Mumia's freedom to appeals to bourgeois liberals who saw Mumia's case as a blemish on the image of American democracy and its lying promise of "justice for all." For years, they focused their demonstrations on the call for a new trial for Mumia—as though he could find justice in the capitalist courts. Now, with the judicial appeals in which they put their faith all but exhausted, many of these groups have petitioned Attorney General Eric Holder for a civil rights investigation into Mumia's case. As we wrote in "Mumia Is an Innocent Man! Free Him Now!" (*WV* No. 941, 28 August 2009), "It would be hard to find a more savage indictment of the reformists' fundamental belief in the 'democracy' of capitalist class rule" than this plea to the "warden-in-chief of the prison dungeons" to bring Mumia some justice.

While fighting to assist Mumia in

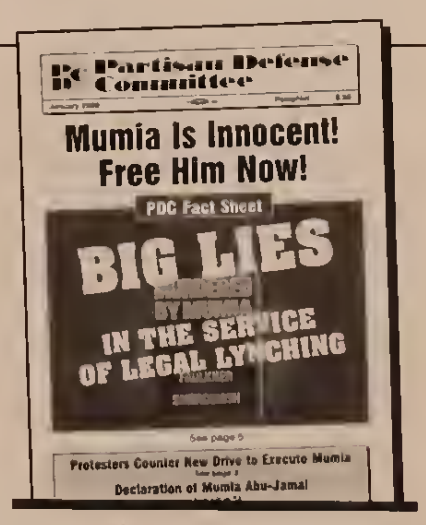
continued on page 7

WV Photo

Partisan Defense Committee contingent at April 2008 Mumia demonstration in Philadelphia.

CORRECTION

In "Protest Conviction of Aaron Harrison!—'War on Terror' Frame-Up of Black Longshoreman" (*WV* No. 949, 1 January) we wrongly wrote that the Bay Area's December 6 Partisan Defense Committee Holiday Appeal benefit was held in Oakland. It was actually held in San Francisco.



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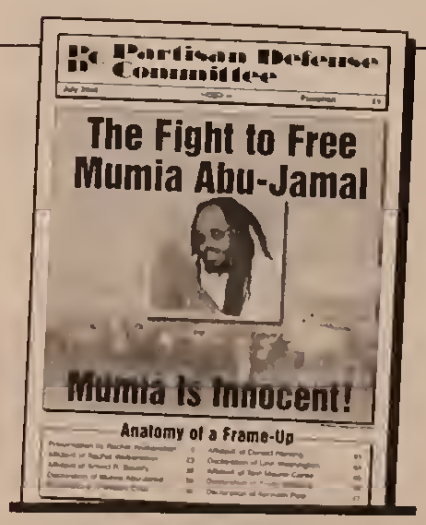

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Vancouver Olympics

State Repression Against Native Peoples, the Poor

Reuters

Canadian Press

Left: RCMP's Emergency Response Team, part of massive police/military mobilization for Olympic Games, patrols Athletes Village in Vancouver, October 2009. Right: Anti-Olympics protesters, 8 February 2009.

The following article is reprinted from Spartacist Canada *No. 163 (Winter 2009/2010), newspaper of the Trotskyist League of Canada/Ligue Trotskyste du Canada.*

SPARTACIST CANADA

For 17 days in February, civil rights in Vancouver will be virtually erased as the city becomes an armed camp for the 2010 Olympics. Under the pretext of "fighting terror," some 16,500 soldiers and police will descend on the city. Dubbed "Operation Podium," this is the largest domestic "security" operation in Canadian history, combining various police forces, the Canadian and U.S. military and the CSIS secret police.

Numerous anti-Olympic activists and their families and friends have already faced harassment, including surprise visits by the cops at home, school and work. One professor at the University of British Columbia, Chris Shaw, was subjected to a campaign of RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] intimidation that included calls to his ex-wife, while cops followed one of his friends to a college exam. The cops are of course preparing to infiltrate protest groups and provoke confrontations, openly rebuffing the liberals of the B.C. [British Columbia] Civil Liberties Association, who requested that the state refrain from such tactics.

Vancouver's city council under mayor Gregor Robertson (a former NDP MLA [New Democratic Party Member of the Legislative Assembly]) has passed a package of "temporary" Olympic bylaws that ban leafleting, unauthorized signage and megaphones. All protests must be preapproved and must take place in state-sanctioned areas cordoned off by cops. The provincial government's Bill 13 permits police to enter private residences to confiscate protest signs on display, threatening arrests and fines of up to $10,000 a day. Ominously, Vancouver police have acquired a "sonic gun" that can blast crowds of people with up to 152 decibels causing disorientation, pain and potential hearing loss. Widely used for "crowd control" by U.S. occupation forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, a similar weapon was employed by the cops against protesters at the G20 summit in Pittsburgh in September.

The current repressive moves intersect and are amplified by the ongoing "war on terror." Heavily censored CSIS/RCMP documents obtained by the media identify "several threats to Olympic security, including anti-globalization, anti-corporate and First Nations activists" (*Province*, 8 October 2008). The same report makes a deadly equation between leftist and Native activists and "international extremist organizations like al-Qaida."

The rulers' "war on terror" is not a "war" at all but a political campaign that aims to divide the working people against each other while strengthening the arsenal of state repression. In the first instance, it has seen a racist witchhunt of minorities, primarily Muslims but also Sikhs, Tamils and others. Ultimately, the central target of such police-state measures will be the organized working class, whose labour makes society run. The rights of labour and minorities must go forward together, or they will fall back separately!

Unlike liberal opponents of the Olympic crackdown, we Marxists understand that police violence and repression are not mistaken policies of a particular right-wing government or out-of-control state agency. One need only recall the killing by taser of Polish immigrant Robert Dziekanski two years ago by the trigger-happy RCMP to underline the fact that police violence is no aberration but the day-to-day reality of the capitalist state. Under capitalism, the state—comprised at its core of the cops, courts, prisons and military—exists to protect the wealth and power of a tiny minority, the bourgeoisie, who exploit the working masses.

A taste of the potential power of the organized working class was given by striking B.C. paramedics when they set up picket lines that disrupted a high-profile Olympic security exercise for four hours on November 5. The union was protesting government strikebreaking legislation against their seven-month strike—legislation that was reportedly introduced at the direct behest of VANOC, the Olympic organizing committee. The paramedics' picket lines were supported by unionized firefighters, who refused to cross them.

Lindsay/Vancouver Sun

Hundreds of striking paramedics and their supporters rally outside Richmond Olympic Oval, 18 September 2009.

This is the kind of social power that must be unleashed on behalf of the poor and all victims of capitalist repression.

Downtown Eastside: Poverty, Disease and Native Oppression

Vancouver, regularly touted as "the world's most liveable city," has sores to hide and real estate to sell. Behind the glitzy, cosmopolitan image of the city lies poverty so horrendous that it approaches Third World conditions. A priority for the capitalist class is to keep Vancouver's homelessness, addiction, disease and discontent away from the Olympic cameras. In preparation for the Games, the homeless are being chased from parks and thrown in jail, their property confiscated, as the city scrambles to hide its destitute thousands. And it's not only happening in Vancouver. At a November 9 public forum on "Olympic Security Issues," it was reported that hundreds of homeless people were, at that moment, being relocated from the Whistler area—the other main Olympic site—to Kamloops, hundreds of kilometers away.

Vancouver's Downtown Eastside is the poorest urban area in Canada, directly abutting a bustling tourist area and mere blocks from both the financial district and the Olympic Village. Local politicians have been scheming for years to purge the area of its poor residents and now find a convenient pretext. AIDS researchers foresee an increase in HIV infection as addicts are driven away from the needle exchange and safe injection sites in the area. The Downtown Eastside already has North America's highest HIV infection rates. Some 30 percent of drug users there have AIDS, while over half are infected with Hepatitis C.

The aboriginal population in the Downtown Eastside is proportionally seven times higher than in the city at large. For years, Native youth have been driven to the city by the grinding poverty of the reserves elsewhere in B.C. On the Mount Currie reserve, 30 minutes from the multimillion-dollar condos of Whistler, Native families live on a meagre $165 a month. When they get to Vancouver, they face a wall of racism that ensures they remain poor and marginalized.

Indeed, the Canadian rulers have never had anything but contempt for the rights, health and lives of Native people. Canadian capitalism was founded on the destruction of the pre-existing aboriginal societies, which were devastated by disease, military conquest by European colonialism and eventual incarceration in reserves and prisons. The labour movement must defend Native rights! Only the destruction of capitalism and the establishment of workers rule can hold out a future for Native people.

Olympic Extravaganza Amid Capitalist Recession

The 2010 Olympics come amidst a world capitalist economic recession on a scale unseen since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Unemployment in B.C. has doubled since January 2008. The Olympic torch run has passed through desperately poor Native communities and once-thriving working-class mill towns like Port Alberni, where unemployment has soared.

Like its predecessors, these Olympics are suffused with chauvinist flag-waving and nationalist reaction. The "ancient tradition" of the torch relay was in fact introduced by the Nazis for the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Later Olympics have seen massive state repression. Ten days before the 1968 Mexico City Olympics, a massacre left some 1,000 dead after demonstrators in Tlatelolco Plaza were fired upon by soldiers and police for over an hour. In Los Angeles in 1984 the black population was targeted for repression. In 2000 in Sydney, Australia, it was Aborig-

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California...

(continued from page 12)

who addressed the protest at UCLA on November 19:

> "As socialists, we in the Spartacus Youth Club stand for free, quality, integrated education for all. We start from the understanding that to successfully fight the attacks on education, the attacks on working people, the racism and exploitation endemic to the system, you need a revolutionary program aimed at overturning the entire capitalist system. You can't win unless you know who your friends are and who your enemies are—and the Democrats, no less than the Republicans, are the enemies of the working people, of the workers and the oppressed! Obama is the Commander-in-Chief of U.S. imperialism, director of mass murder in Afghanistan and Iraq. The UC Regents and the administration are likewise the vicious representatives of capitalism on campus. The illusions peddled by everyone from BAMN to Student Worker Front to PL [Progressive Labor Party] that the Democrats and the Regents are pressureable—these reformist pressure politics have derailed struggle for years. We say: Abolish the Regents and the administration! For worker/student/teacher control of the university! We fight for a revolutionary workers party that fights for workers revolution!"

At organizing meetings to build the various protests, our fight for such a perspective went decidedly against the grain of the protest organizers. For example, at a UCLA Fights Back coalition meeting, after an SYC member laid out our political program, a representative of the Student Worker Front, Jason Ball, went apoplectic, declaring that this amounted to a call to "smash the UCs"!

No, we want to "smash" race and class privilege in education. We think everyone should have access to the same quality education available to the sons and daughters of the bourgeoisie. We call to nationalize the private universities and for a state-paid living stipend so working people and the poor can attend. We demand the expansion of remedial programs for students relegated to inner-city public schools, an end to the racist "tracking" system in the high schools and their genuine integration, including through the aggressive implementation of busing. Whether this is possible or not is in reality determined by the outcome of class and social struggle. Under capitalism, gains wrested from the ruling class through social struggle are limited and reversible. As communists, our goal is not what is possible within the framework of capitalist society, but the revolutionary overthrow of capitalist class rule and the establishment of a workers state as a transition to the construction of a classless, egalitarian society where scarcity has been eliminated and education is the right of all.

The pseudo-communists of Progressive Labor Party, on the other hand, are doing their part to defend the "politics of the possible." An integral part of the UCLA Fights Back coalition, they are building protests on the basis of liberal pressure politics like all the other reformists. Typically, despite formulaic injunctions to "fight for communism" in their newspaper, *Challenge*, on the ground when we argued for our Marxist program at a planning meeting, PL told us there would be time for discussion of communism later but not when a political protest was being planned!

Likewise, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and Socialist Organizer (SO) are doing their level best to confine the protests to what is acceptable to the campus administration and bourgeois liberals. Although usually found mindlessly enthusing over any type of protest, they have actually criticized the occupiers from the right.

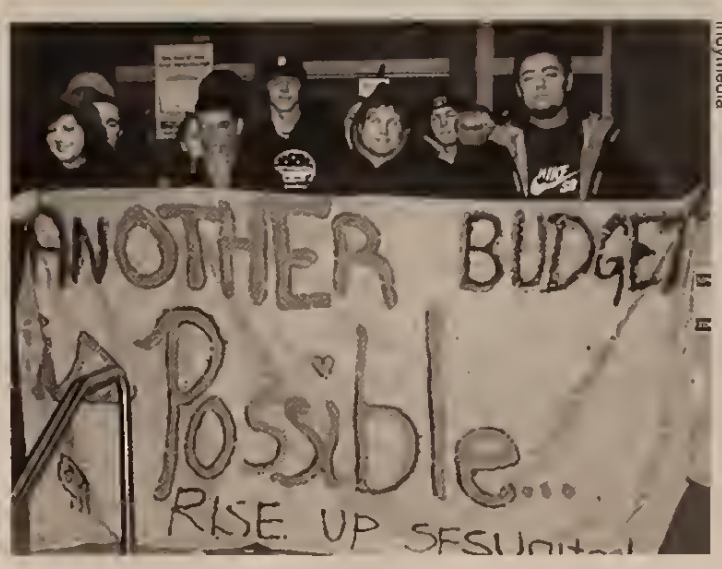
In an article titled "Where We Go Now at SFSU" (*Socialist Worker* online, 14 December 2009), the ISO proclaimed its "solidarity with and support for the occupation" but went on to complain:

> "This action disorganized the General Assembly that had been planned for Wednesday, and had to be put off because of the occupation. Faculty and staff as well as students openly expressed their dismay at this unilateral overriding of the democratic process. Building a genuine democratic assembly that unites students, faculty and staff is a sometimes difficult, but definitely worthwhile and necessary project. The action on Wednesday set that project back."

What rattled the ISO's chain was that the "undemocratic" building occupation screwed up plans for the General Assembly, planned the same night, with the main demand that SFSU president Corrigan "attend... and answer to the student body"!

Intercontinental Press

May 1968: Workers at Renault plant near Paris vote down union bureaucrats' agreement with government. Proletarian struggle brought France to a halt.



Indymedia

Banner at San Francisco State University promotes illusion that capitalist system can be tinkered with to make it "fairer."

In fact, although the occupiers used more determined methods, they shared the same aim. On their blog, they also demanded that Corrigan "have an open discussion with students," promoting the illusion that Corrigan, whose job is to administer SFSU on behalf of the capitalist class that rules this exploitative, repressive society, would take the side of the students fighting budget cuts!

Following the September 24 Berkeley protest, a Socialist Organizer article railed against "impatient ultra-left students [who] are already arguing that the movement has to move on to 'more militant tactics' such as occupations" ("What Next After September 24?" *The Organizer* online, 4 October 2009). Calling building occupations a "distraction" and, grotesquely, "a pretext for the administrators and the police to repress the movement," SO took particular offense at the Santa Cruz occupiers' statement: "We do not seek structural reforms. We demand not a free university but a free society. A free university in the midst of a capitalist society is like a reading room in a prison." Actually, that's not a bad statement. But SO berated it as "bizarre," saying: "All activists with at least one foot in reality know that the path to a 'free society' passes through building a grassroots resistance movement today to defend public education."

Socialist Organizer's appeals for the unity of the "movement" are premised on the lie that organizing right-minded people in large enough numbers can convince the profit-driven ruling class to address the needs of working people, blacks and the poor. Today it is the movement to stop budget cuts; yesterday it was the antiwar movement in which the reformists argued that mobilizing masses in the street on a program of "peace" would be sufficient to stay the hand of U.S. imperialism from its bloody wars and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. Such movement-mongering serves only to reinforce the rule of the bourgeoisie, by sowing illusions that the government, particularly Democratic Party politicians, can represent the "will of the people." As Lenin explained, capitalist democracy is nothing but a form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. For the result of liberal pressure politics one need only look to the fate of many previous movements that ended in the graveyard of the capitalist Democratic Party.

Student Vanguardism vs. Revolutionary Working-Class Perspective

Eclectic groupings of self-proclaimed anarchists, pseudo-Marxists and liberals promote building occupations as a more effective tactic to change the way the university is run. Various blogs proclaim the need to "occupy everything" and "reclaim space" and echo a popular chant of the protests, "Whose university? Our university!" However, 24-hour occupation or not, universities are capitalist institutions.

We fight against the use of the universities and schools as direct agents of U.S. imperialism: ***ROTC, military recruiters off campus now!*** Nonetheless, under capitalism, the capitalists and their agents run the education system to serve their interests, including propagating bourgeois ideology and training the next generation of administrators, CEOs, military officers and Dr. Strangeloves of U.S. imperialism. The working class is to get just enough education so the capitalists can extract profit from its labor power. Under American capitalism, which is rooted in the racial oppression and segregation of the black population at the bottom of society, the masses of blacks in the inner cities are increasingly considered a "surplus population," no longer needed as a reserve army of labor and thus not "worth" providing with even the basic means of survival, much less educating.

As the Russian revolutionaries Nikolai Bukharin and Evgeny Preobrazhensky wrote after the Russian Revolution in *The ABC of Communism* (1920):

> "In bourgeois society the school has three principal tasks to fulfill. First, it inspires the coming generation of workers with devotion and respect for the capitalist regime. Secondly, it creates from the young of the ruling classes 'cultured' controllers of the working population. Thirdly, it assists capitalist production in the application of sciences to technique, thus increasing capitalist profits."

The campuses are not separate from the rest of bourgeois society, and cannot be wrested from the control of the rapacious capitalist class short of the overthrow of the whole system through a workers revolution.

A prominent demand at UCLA and other campus protests has been the call to "democratize" the Board of Regents. The UC Regents, who banned affirmative action even before anti-affirmative action Proposition 209 passed in 1996, are the capitalist watchdogs over the university. They are a rogues' gallery of many of the most powerful figures in the California capitalist class, from bankers and top executives to close friends of the governor, real estate moguls and more—including financier Richard Blum, husband of Democratic Party Senator Dianne Feinstein. It is laughable to think they can be "accountable" to anyone other than to the class they represent. ***Abolish the Boord of Regents and the administrotion! Those who work, study ond teoch ot the universities should run them—for worker/student/teacher control!***

Compared to the "democratize the Regents" bleating of the liberals and reformists, statements by the occupiers sound much more radical. For instance, the occupiers of UCLA's Campbell Hall —which they renamed Carter-Huggins Hall in honor of the two Black Panthers murdered there 40 years ago—said in their statement, "We are under no illusions. The UC Regents will vote the budget cuts and raise student fees.... We know that the

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Training a New Generation of Communist Fighters

SYC Speech at Los Angeles Holiday Appeal

We print below, slightly edited for publication, an excerpt from the speech given by Spartacus Youth Club representative Tony Duran at the Partisan Defense Committee's Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners in Los Angeles on December 13. The Partisan Defense Committee is a class-struggle, nonsectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League.

The SYC wants to train a new generation of revolutionaries in the tradition of the Trotskyist Fourth International:

> "To face reality squarely; not to seek the line of least resistance: to call things by their right names; to speak the truth to the masses, no matter how bitter it may be; not to fear obstacles; to be true in little things as in big ones; to base one's program on the logic of the class struggle; to be bold when the hour for action arrives —these are the rules of the Fourth International."
>
> —Leon Trotsky, *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International* (1938)

The Spartacus Youth Club speech at the November 19 UCLA Regents protest garnered much applause when students heard our advocacy of free, quality, integrated education for all. In fact, as I concluded my speech, I received a couple of text messages from a friend. The first one read, "I heard you speak." The second said, "You had them until Obama"! Our opposition to Obama hit a nerve with many of the students who have illusions in him.

When Obama was elected we said that this was nothing to celebrate for the working class, speaking the truth to the masses no matter how bitter. Reformists like the International Socialist Organization were busy "meeting people where they are at" in their present consciousness, at parties organized to celebrate an end to eight years of Republican rule. In this country, the main obstacle to revolutionary consciousness is illusions in the Democrats pushed by these reformists and trade-union bureaucrats. The SYC does not fear obstacles and is not interested in seeking the line of least resistance; we will meet these illusions head on and aim to break workers and students from this false and deadly consciousness.

The Russian Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, which overthrew capitalism in Russia, was not a Russian peculiarity. It was the revolutionary Marxist program of the Bolsheviks that was able to lead the Russian working class and oppressed masses, when they rose, against the capitalist system and for socialist revolution. The SYC seeks to train a new generation of young communist fighters in this tradition. You better believe that, armed with this revolutionary Marxist program, this new generation of communist fighters will be prepared and bold when the hour for action arrives! ***Break with the Demacrats! For a revalutionary warkers party! Forward to a sacialist revolution!***

California...

(continued from page 5)

crisis is systematic. It reaches beyond the Regents, beyond the criminal budget cuts in Sacramento, beyond the economic crisis, to the very foundations of our society." That's true. But the question posed is what political program is needed if you are going to wage a genuine fight to get rid of this system. In other words, the question posed is revolution versus reform.

An article in the London *Guardian* titled "A Communist Revival?" (8 October 2009) points to the UC Santa Cruz occupations as indicating "the return of communism, in its original sense." In their statement "Communiqué from an Absent Future," the Santa Cruz occupiers describe the need for imbuing the occupations with "a truly communist content." In fact, what they put forward amounts to little more than New Leftist "it's right to rebel" radicalism. Thus, they point to the mass protests in Greece against the cold-blooded killing of a 15-year-old student by the cops, arguing that "the rioting was the obvious means to enact the destruction of an entire political and economic system." But "rioting" has never ended capitalism and it never will; what's required is working-class action under the leadership of a revolutionary internationalist party. Anything else comes down to the same old pressure politics.

Our comrades of the Trotskyist Group of Greece fought for the defense of the anarchist and other youth against state repression, demanding the immediate release of all those arrested in these protests and that all charges be dropped. As they wrote in a leaflet distributed to a massive one-day general strike:

> "The protests against the cop terror need an organized expression—one that welds the anger of the youth protesters with the social power of the proletariat. The working class must be mobilized not only to defend youth protesters against the violence of the cops, but as part of a struggle against the capitalist system itself.... Although anarchists may seem 'militant' to some youth, they are opposed to building the one instrument that is indispensable for getting rid of the capitalist exploiters and their state—a Leninist vanguard party."
>
> —"Greece Rocked by Protests," *WV* No. 927, 2 January 2009

While anarchists claim that their aim is to "smash the state," they are opposed to replacing it with a workers state. History has proven time and time again that anarchists invariably end up on the side of reformists in defense of capitalism, as in the Spanish Civil War (see "Trotskyism vs. Popular Frontism in the Spanish Civil War," *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 61, Spring 2009).

A group centrally involved in leading the occupations at SFSU is Student Unity and Power (SUP), which includes many self-proclaimed anarchists. SUP mainly embraces a rehashed version of student vanguardism similar to what was touted by the New Left in the 1960s. Student vanguardism is premised on the notion that students are inherently revolutionary or can enact revolutionary change. SUP is fond of using the example of France 1968—a student-sparked but working-class-led incipient revolution. Although betrayed by the Stalinist and social-democratic trade-union misleaders, the mobilization of the French working class in revolutionary struggle in '68 blew a hole in the student-vanguardist view of many New Leftists who had previously written off the working class as "conservative" and "bought off." When the proletariat rebelled, it brought France to a halt.

Rally at UC Berkeley during two-day strike of UPTE workers, 18-19 November 2009.

During the recent occupation, students around SUP had banners calling for "working class unity" and for "class war." But this is just window dressing. According to SUP, "California's budget cuts can only be defeated by a militant student resistance movement, building awareness and uniting both student bodies in a statement of solidarity with the education sector as a whole" ("Who We Are," *Student Unity & Power*, 21 September 2009). Students are a petty-bourgeois layer who have no relation to the means of production in capitalist society and are thus divorced from the levers of social power. In contrast, the strength of the working class to fight capitalist attacks lies in its access to the means of producing wealth—its ability to withhold its labor power—as well as its numbers and social organization. Students must therefore ally with the working class, not the other way around.

Dead-End Pressure Politics

The fake socialists can't even choke out the demand for free tuition. In contrast, the demands of the December 9 student occupation at SFSU included "that education from kindergarten to PHD, be free of charge," and "that the university system be run by the students, faculty and staff, not administrators." Solidarizing with campus workers, they also called to end the furlough program and layoffs. Nonetheless, these apparently more militant student occupations fundamentally share the reformists' view that the racist American ruling class can be pressured to serve the interests of working people and the oppressed. Take, for example, another demand of the SFSU occupiers: "that prisons are closed and defunded." The prison system (along with the army, cops and courts) is an integral part of the repressive apparatus of the capitalist state, whose purpose is the forcible suppression of the working class, the oppressed and any perceived challenge to their class rule. This apparatus of violence can be destroyed only in a workers revolution—certainly not through student occupations!—and must be replaced by proletarian organs of power.

Likewise, the occupiers' demand "that the imperialist wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Gaza are ended, and that money is used to feed and clothe the poor" is a rehash of the timeworn reformist plea, "money for jobs and education, not for war," which is based on the delusion that spending money on war instead of human need is just a question of misplaced priorities by the capitalist rulers. The truth is that imperialist war is not a policy, but a necessary outgrowth of capitalism and the defense of imperialist interests abroad.

These demands are cut of the same cloth as the call put out by various liberals and reformists to "tax the rich" as a supposed solution to the budget crisis. This slogan was emblazoned on the T-shirts of members of the International Socialist Organization at an October 24 "Mobilizing Conference to Save Public Education" at UC Berkeley that drew 800 participants from various campuses. A month before, the ISO had an article in their paper titled, "Is It as Simple as 'Tax the Rich?'" (*Socialist Worker*, 8 September 2009) that answered, "Yes. It is. It's that simple." Also seeking to advise the financiers of American imperialism, Socialist Organizer suggested: "There are many alternatives to the cuts: UC Regent and CSU trustee executive salaries could be slashed immediately; new building construction and other non-essential projects could be put on hold; reserve funds could be used; the rich could be taxed their fair share; Obama's bailout money and/or war spending could go to saving state services" ("What Next After September 24?" *The Organizer* online, 4 October 2009).

At SFSU, the ISO is active in a coalition called SFSUnited, whose banner at recent protests read, "Another Budget Is Possible" —another attempt to tinker with the capitalist system to make it "fairer." The group Speak Out Now/Revolutionary Workers Group (SON/RWG) waxes on about the need to create a "true stimulus" and fills its paper with pie charts and graphs to show where the bourgeoisie's money could be going! In a 15 March 2009 article titled "Education Is a Right—Not a Privilege," they state: "We have the numbers to force the state and the bosses to spend the money on the needs of the majority" (*Speak Out Now*). Such pressure politics are an ideological support to the capitalist system, spreading illusions that it can provide for the needs of working people and the oppressed through the "lesser evil" capitalist Democratic Party, a political dead end for those who want to see real social change. In fact, after protests broke out on campuses across the state, Republican governor Arnold Schwarzenegger

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did propose "another budget"—one that cut welfare and Medicaid instead of cutting funds for public universities. (For more on the California crisis, see "The California Budget Crisis and the Bankruptcy of American Capitalism," *WV* No. 941, 28 August 2009.)

Break with the Democrats!

Not surprisingly, just a little over a year ago many of these same organizations were crawling over each other for a front-row seat on Barack Obama's Democratic Party election handwagon. Progressive Labor actively participated in Obama's campaign (*Challenge*, 26 March 2008; see "Obama, Clinton: No Friends of Workers, Blacks, the Oppressed," *WV* No. 913, 25 April 2008). Eric Gardner and his UCLA Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) staged a "No to McCain Rally" on the eve of the elections, and BAMN greeted Obama's impending election with gushing praise, saying: "Barack Obama's victory in the November elections must be recognized as far more than a question of the victory of one very gifted, moderately progressive black American or of his moderately progressive party.... It would represent, even taking into account all necessary qualifications, truly a victory of reason against unreason" ("The Obama Era—Renewal of King's Dream or the New Jim Crow?" *Liberator*, January 2009). Declaring a "reversal" of "conservative dogmas and prejudices" ("What's at Stake in the Battle of the Budget?" *Socialist Worker* online, 3 March 2009), the ISO greeted Obama's federal budget proposals by arguing they would "increase spending on programs for the poor, set a goal of 'universal' health care coverage, expand access to higher education." What a joke!

The election of Obama as CEO of American capitalism was to provide a much-needed facelift for U.S. imperialism to further its predatory interests abroad and grind down the working class, blacks and immigrants at home. While handing out billions to bankers and auto bosses, Obama has appealed to everyone else to embrace a "spirit of sacrifice." His education policy is a continuation of the hated Bush regime's, based on the anti-education No Child Left Behind Act. Obama is pushing through the privatization of public schools and union-busting through "merit pay" and charter school expansion. Meanwhile, he repeats the disgusting tirade that crumbling schools and poverty are "no excuses" for the black masses and that "hardships will just make you stronger."

As we wrote after the arrest of black Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates Jr.:

> "The myth that black oppression exists in people's minds, rather than being inherent to American capitalism, serves to blame the oppressed for their oppression. Ghetto schools are nothing but holding pens for minority youth with no future in society because, especially with the deindustrialization of this country, black ghetto youth are not wanted or needed by America's capitalist rulers. The daily reality of black life in America can be measured by the nearly one million black men and women who are incarcerated in the country's jails and prisons."
>
> —"Obama's 'Change' Is More of the Same," *WV* No. 940, 31 July 2009

Harlingue-Viollet

Adult literacy class in the Soviet Union, early 1920s. Bolshevik Revolution opened the road to unprecedented social progress.

Our fight against the racist purges of the universities and every manifestation of racial oppression in bourgeois society is part of our program of revolutionary integrationism, which is based on the understanding that full political, social and economic equality for black people requires the destruction of the capitalist system in which black oppression is rooted. The fight for black freedom must be central to the fight to free the working class as a whole from the chains of capitalist exploitation. Black workers, who constitute one of the most conscious and militant layers of the American working class, will play a leading role in this struggle.

The main obstacle to building the revolutionary workers party necessary to lead such a revolution is the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy, which, through its support to the Democratic Party, politically ties workers to their class enemy—politics that the reformist left tails. The interests of workers and the oppressed are irreconcilably counterposed to those of the capitalists. But for today's union leaders, the militant struggle that was required to forge the trade unions in the first place is anathema. Instead, the trade-union leaders pursue a policy of class collaboration, preaching reliance on their Democratic "friends" in government. In fact, the big-time, big-sellout trade-union misleaders, like the United Auto Workers' Ron Gettelfinger, have shoved down the throats of the organized working class the lie that they must sacrifice hard-won gains for the capitalists' bottom line in the current economic crisis.

While the campus unions brought members out to the protests, the leaders made sure they were not mobilized as workers whose interests were at stake, but as atomized individuals in a supporting role to the student protesters. Neither were there mobilizations of other unionized workers, who have an interest in educating their sons and daughters. While the Alameda Labor Council "sanctioned" (on paper) the November 18-19 UPTE strike, they did nothing in the concrete to bring out Bay Area labor to the pickets. Likewise with the Communications Workers of America—UPTE's parent union—nada!

At the UCs, campus workers are divided into several unions, including CUE, UPTE, AFSCME (which includes food service and maintenance workers) and the United Auto Workers (graduate student instructors). One out, all out—***for the mobilization of all campus unions to fight budget cuts! For one campus union!*** On the second day of the UPTE strike at UC Berkeley, unions negotiated with student activists to hold teach-ins on campus, behind the picket lines! The only way to shut down the campus is to make sure it's not business as usual—picket lines mean don't cross!

The Road Forward

To drive back the ruling class's assaults, students and minorities must be mobilized behind the power of the multiracial working class. As the Spartacus Youth Club's predecessor, the Revolutionary Communist Youth, stated:

> "It is wrong...to pretend that the fight against budget cuts can be won within the framework of that issue alone and involving only teachers and students. Revolutionaries must point out that ***there is no*** 'program for the budget cuts' as such, but that a fight against these cuts can only be successful if linked to the struggles of the working class against capitalism—through a vanguard party. At the same time, we do not sit back and ignore these struggles—we support and initiate demonstrations against the cuts and for free higher education with stipend, seeking to use these times when students are aroused, and thus more open to political ideas, to win individual student militants to the working-class struggle against capital, based on the full program of revolutionary Marxism."
>
> —"Budget Cuts Hit Campuses—Only Workers Can Smash Phase III!" *Revolutionary Communist Youth Newsletter* No. 17, May-June 1973

In our interventions into campus protests, the SYCs seek to win students and youth to the perspective of building a revolutionary workers party. Our model is the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky that led the workers to power in the Russian Revolution of October 1917, shattering capitalist rule. Despite its subsequent degeneration under Stalinist bureaucratic misrule, the Soviet Union remained a workers state until its destruction through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92. The overturn of capitalism made possible enormous economic and social gains for working people in the USSR, including in education. The essential precondition for human emancipation from starvation, exploitation, ignorance and inequality is a planned, socialized economy on a global scale. Only in this way can the accumulated knowledge and culture of civilization be truly appropriated by those who are today deprived of that right.■

Veronica Jones...

(continued from page 3)

every legal avenue available to him, we have insisted from the beginning that no reliance must be placed on the rigged scales of a "justice" system that, with the cops and prosecutors, lies at the core of the racist capitalist state, or on the capitalist politicians—whether Democratic, Republican or Green—who serve that state. We have long publicized Mumia's case and initiated and intervened into protests on his behalf, calling to free Mumia and abolish the racist death penalty. In doing so, we have put forward a class-struggle strategy premised on the understanding that the working class, whose labor makes the wheels of capitalist society turn, has the potential power to shake and ultimately overturn the capitalist system of repression. At the same time, as we wrote in *WV* No. 941:

> "The fight to mobilize the social power of the working class in struggle for Mumia's freedom faces many obstacles. Integrated unions representing millions of workers have gone on record in support of Mumia. But these millions have not been mobilized ***in action*** to combat this racist frame-up. The responsibility for that lies with the pro-capitalist trade-union misleaders, who overwhelmingly refuse to call their members into action to defend their economic interests, much less in defense of a black political prisoner. The bureaucracy's class-collaborationist policies, which have tied the working class to its capitalist class enemy, have dissipated the fighting strength of the unions. The pathetic reformist and liberal petitioners of Obama and Holder similarly do their best in reinforcing belief in the inherent benevolence of the capitalist state."

We honor Veronica Jones for her defiance of the executioners in black robes. As revolutionary Marxists, our task is to forge a vanguard party that can make the working class conscious of its historic interest to be the instrumentality to shatter the power of the racist capitalist rulers and their state, opening the road to a socialist society where black oppression and the whole machinery of capitalist state terror will be relics of a barbaric past.■

Olympics...

(continued from page 4)

inal people in the cops' crosshairs, while in Athens in 2004 it was the Roma (Gypsy) population under the jackboot.

Many critics of the Olympics seek to take advantage of the fact that the eyes of the world will be on Vancouver to highlight the horrors perpetrated against the poor. But the program on offer from most activist groups amounts to pleading with the capitalists to adjust their priorities. One Downtown Eastside activist was quoted: "Our government is spending about $6 billion on games.... That money could provide over 30,000 homes for people who are homeless in Canada. Or it could be used to completely wipe out poverty and homelessness in BC" (Carnegie Community Action Project press release, 7 February 2009). Indeed it could, but it is a complete fantasy to think that the capitalist rulers can be pressured to reorder their system in the interests of working people and the poor.

Capitalism is rooted in the grinding exploitation of the workers by a ruling class whose only interest is the pursuit of profit. The boom-bust cycle intrinsic to the capitalist economy periodically produces mass immiseration, while the capitalists always maintain a reserve army of the unemployed and destitute as a means of keeping downward pressure on wages. There is no way to end poverty and homelessness short of sweeping away this barbaric social system through workers revolution.

The social-democratic NDP, official opposition to the ruling B.C. Liberals, has spoken out against Olympic security spending and the attacks on civil liberties. But its pretense to defend the poor and oppressed is sheer hypocrisy. Despite its links to the labour movement, the NDP's program has always been to defend capitalism, as was shown clearly when the New Democrats ruled B.C. during the 1990s. It was an NDP government that ordered the largest military operation in RCMP history at Gustafsen Lake in 1995 in order to evict a handful of Native activists from a "private" ranch, turning it into a war zone.

Even as the capitalist state ramps up its war on the poor, the fake Trotskyists of the Fightback group [affiliated with Alan Wood's International Marxist Tendency] are single-mindedly occupied with their "Take Back the Party" campaign aimed at bolstering the NDP by giving it a "left" facelift. In a November 25 statement, they write: "Fightback has long warned that the right-ward drift of the NDP leadership in BC would hurt the party in the polls." In contrast, we Trotskyists seek to break the workers from the deadening grip of social democracy, starting with the most advanced layers.

These Olympics shine a spotlight on the repressive nature of the capitalist state, which cannot be "cleaned up," reformed or pressured into acting on behalf of the workers and the oppressed. It must be shattered by workers revolution. Stopping racist state terror, defending the rights of Native people and the poor—all this and more requires the forging of a multiracial revolutionary workers party that fights to expropriate the capitalist class and build a new, socialist society where a centrally planned economy will produce for human need, not the profits of a tiny minority.■

Iran...

(continued from page 1)

cruelly dashed when the Islamic hierarchy under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini placed itself at the head of the anti-Shah upsurge and ascended to power.

The huge clerical caste of mullahs and their allies among the traditional bourgeoisie in the bazaars were a *backward-looking* force opposed to all social progress. Immediately on taking power, the clerical regime viciously attacked the working class and oppressed. Women were forced back under the *chador*, the stifling head-to-foot black veil that symbolizes their subordination. Kurdish militants were massacred by firing squads. The workers councils that were thrown up in the course of the upheaval were replaced by Islamic councils subordinated to the regime. Soon, Iranian youth were sent to die by the hundreds of thousands in a years-long border war with neighboring Iraq that was reactionary on both sides.

The 1979 "revolution" was a *defeat*, and the Iranian masses are paying the price to this day. Yet, criminally, the rise to power of a movement based on the mosque and bazaar was *directly aided* by the then large and influential Iranian left and cheered on by pseudo-socialist groups abroad. These groups claimed you had to support the religious forces because they were "leading a mass movement." No matter that Khomeini et al. made their aims clear from the very start: enslaving women, stoning homosexuals and "adulterers" to death, persecuting religious minorities like the Baha'i, reversing the partial land reforms that had weakened the power of the mosque. For the reformist left, questions of class and program were, and are, irrelevant because immersion in the "movement" of the day is the be-all and end-all of politics. And in this case the "movement" was one of black reaction.

Reuters

U.S. imperialist occupiers in Khost Province, Afghanistan, December 2009.

Uniquely, our organization, then known as the international Spartacist tendency, warned that the triumph of Khomeini's forces would lead to a regime no less bloody and despotic than the Shah's. We said: "Down with the Shah—Don't bow to Khomeini! For workers revolution!" We emphasized the fight for women's liberation, a life-or-death question in this part of the world, where women have long been treated as human chattel, and said: "No to the veil! For women's liberation through socialist revolution!" We called for the right of self-determination—to national independence—for the minority nationalities in Iran's "prison house of peoples." For our principled revolutionary stance, our comrades around the world were vilified and physically attacked not only by clerical thugs but by reformist leftists acting at their behest.

Here are some examples of what the reformists said at the time. The Canadian International Socialists ran a headline in their press saying: "The Form—Religion, The Spirit—Revolution" (*Workers Action*, February 1979). The *Militant* (27 February 1979), published by the U.S. Socialist Workers Party, gushed: "Victory in Iran: Iranian Masses Show the Way for Workers Around the World." The British-based group around Alan Woods and the late Ted Grant—today represented by Fightback in Canada—even claimed in their theoretical journal that the mullah movement could smash capitalist class rule and establish a workers state. I lived in England at this time and recall a public meeting organized by the British affiliate of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat (USec). One of their leaders, who had visited Tehran, boasted that he joined in chants of "Allah Akbar" ("God is great") during demonstrations in the city.

Iran had long had one of the strongest self-proclaimed communist movements in the Near East. The pro-Soviet Tudeh Party dominated in the working class. In the 1970s, tens of thousands of youth were won to other left-wing groups, from the Maoist Peykar to the guerrillaist Fedayeen and more. But without exception these groups acted to subordinate working-class struggles to the Muslim hierarchy. In the wake of the mullahs' victory, these leftists were hunted down, jailed and executed. The remnants who made it into exile have overwhelmingly retreated from politics or been rendered cynical.

Now a new generation is taking to the streets against what they rightly call the "new dictator." Fully 70 percent of Iran's population is under 30. These youth have little knowledge of or identification with the political program and liberating ideals of Marxism, or how this program was perverted by the Stalinists and other reformists in 1978-79 in the name of collaboration with a wing of the capitalist class. The worldwide retrogression of consciousness that followed the destruction of the Soviet Union, the world's first workers state, in the early 1990s means that young activists and workers in struggle do not generally identify their aspirations with the fight for workers revolution. This has a double impact in Iran, where the 1979 defeat is also widely, if wrongly, seen as a failure of the communist project.

Thus far, the Iranian upheaval has been under the sway of "reform" clerics centered on Hussein Moussavi and his "Green Movement of Hope." ("Green" as in Islam, not environmentalism.) But Moussavi, one of the founders of the "Islamic Republic," is no less a butcher than his rivals in the current regime. While he was prime minister from 1981 to 1989, untold thousands of leftists, Kurds and women's rights activists were slaughtered in the prisons and buried in mass graves. A decade later, in 1999, militant student protests were drowned in blood by the "reform" government of then-president Mohammad Khatami, now a Moussavi ally. Also aligned with Moussavi is another former president, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. A notoriously corrupt capitalist, Rafsanjani may well be the richest man in Iran.

Abroad, the protests are being cheered by everyone from royalist supporters of the former Shah to bourgeois democrats and the remnants of the left. The workers and oppressed of Iran have no interest in supporting *either* of the cabals fighting over how best to pursue the mullahs' bloody rule. We say: Down with the butcher Ahmadinejad and the whole Islamic Republic! No support to Moussavi's "Green Movement," a deadly trap for Iran's youth, women and workers! We fight to win elements among the new generation of Iranians to the struggle to forge a Leninist-Trotskyist party armed with a program to liberate the masses through workers socialist revolution.

AFP

Iranian workers protest against newly enacted anti-labor laws at May Day demonstration in Tehran, 2006.

Down With Imperialist Threats Against Iran!

I want to turn now to the threats to Iran from U.S. imperialism and its allies, including Canada. A week ago, just after Iranian leader Ahmadinejad addressed the United Nations, U.S. president Barack Obama announced the supposed discovery of another Iranian nuclear development site near the mullahs' holy city of Qom. Obama declared that Washington would not allow Iran's nuclear development, calling it a grave threat to "world peace." To call this hypocritical is a vast understatement. By orders of magnitude, the United States is the greatest purveyor of war in the world today. It is also the only country ever to use atomic weapons on a civilian population, killing 200,000 people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In contrast, Iran's rulers are merely tinpot dictators.

It's an open secret that the U.S. and other imperialist powers have staged numerous provocations in the hope that Iranian retaliation would serve as a pretext to attack the country. They've been steadily beefing up military forces in and around the Persian Gulf, including positioning U.S. aircraft carriers near the Iranian coast, as well as developing the so-called "missile defense program." Last year, BBC news reported that the U.S. had readied plans for attacks on Iran, to be triggered either by "confirmation that Iran was developing a nuclear weapon" or "a high-casualty attack on US forces in neighbouring Iraq...if it were traced directly back to Tehran."

As revolutionary opponents of U.S. and Canadian imperialism, we unequivocally condemn these provocations as well as the imperialist sanctions against Iran implemented through the United Nations. These are the opening shots in war, as the case of Iraq demonstrates. ***One and a half million*** Iraqis were killed and the country devastated by the UN sanctions that preceded the 2003 U.S. invasion. Since its creation at the end of World War II, the UN has always been a fig leaf for naked imperialist aggression against semicolonial countries.

The U.S. and Israel have repeatedly threatened military action against Iran's nuclear program. In the face of such threats, we say that Iran *needs* nuclear weaponry and adequate delivery systems for deterrence. In today's world, possession of nuclear arms has become a guarantee of national sovereignty. Neighboring Iraq's lack of "weapons of mass destruction," including nukes, emboldened the U.S. to invade and occupy the country, leading to the carnage of the last six years. In the event of a military attack on Iran by U.S. imperialism, or by Israel—the only nuclear-armed country in the Near East—or any other force operating as proxy for the imperialists, our stand as Marxists would be ***revolutionary defensism***. We would call for the military defense of Iran against imperialism while giving absolutely no political support to the reactionary Tehran regime, just as we did concerning Saddam Hussein's Iraq at the time of the U.S. invasion.

Washington and its allies have naturally sought to intervene in the political turmoil within Iran. Obama declared that he was "appalled and outraged" by the regime's crackdown. After 30 years of oppressive mullah rule, there are doubtless many in Iran who have illusions in Western bourgeois democracy. Some might even see the "democratic" imperialists as a potential ally—we've seen examples of this on protests called by Iranian exiles here and elsewhere. These illusions have been furthered by the facelift given to U.S. imperialism with the election of Obama in place of the war-crazed Bush gang.

Whether administered by Democrats or Republicans, U.S. imperialism is the deadliest enemy of working people around the globe; and Canada, far from being a "peacekeeper," acts as Washington's loyal junior partner-in-crime. It was the CIA, in collusion with the British, that organized the 1953 coup that overthrew then-prime minister Mohammad Mossadeq to reverse his nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. The imperialists then put the Shah back in power and backed his blood-drenched regime until the bitter end. We say: Down with the imperialist occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq! U.S. out of Pakistan and Central Asia! Imperialist hands off Iran!

For Permanent Revolution in Iran!

I now want to turn to the theoretical and programmatic underpinnings of our revolutionary perspective for Iran. Our model is the October 1917 Revolution in Russia. The program of ***permanent revolution***, first developed by the Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky for the Russian Revolution, also points the road to national and social liberation in countries like Iran, where economic and social development has been stunted by the global domination of the imperialist powers.

The October Revolution showed that only the working class, leading the peasant and urban plebeian masses, can liberate the societies of countries of belated capitalist development. In the imperialist epoch of decaying capitalism that began more than a century ago, all wings of the bourgeoisie in such countries are too dependent on their ties to the imperialists, too fearful of independent working-class action to play any progressive role. They are incapable of solving the bourgeois-democratic tasks associated with the great European revolutions of the 17th and 18th centuries such as agrarian revolution, national independence, democratic freedoms and women's rights.

As Trotsky explained, the working class must rally the oppressed masses including by raising democratic demands such as for a revolutionary constituent assembly, fighting for agrarian revolution to give land to the peasants, for the rights of women and national minorities. In seizing state power and establishing their own dictatorship, the workers will be compelled to institute socialist measures, such as expropriating the means of production and establishing a planned economy. But these revolutions will survive and flourish only if they are extended to the heartlands of world imperialism, the advanced

Exposed Extent of Zionist Nuclear Arsenal

Vanunu Arrested: Let Him Leave Israel

On December 29, Israeli police arrested Mordechai Vanunu, the brave whistle-blower of Israel's hidden massive nuclear arsenal, as he was meeting with a Norwegian woman at a Jerusalem hotel. He was hauled into court and reportedly placed under house arrest. Despite Vanunu having served every minute of his 18-year prison sentence, the government—using a State of Emergency statute passed in 1945 when Palestine was under British Mandate—has committed him to imprisonment within Israel's borders. He is barred from leaving the country, talking to non-Israelis, going near airports, ports, embassies, and is under 24-hour surveillance. Vanunu's attorney has protested that Vanunu was "arrested for a relationship between a man and a woman.... He is not being accused of giving any secrets."

The vindictive Zionist state will not rest until Vanunu is permanently silenced for having revealed 24 years ago that Israel's capitalist rulers had enough nuclear weapons and delivery systems to not only incinerate every Arab capital but to bomb major cities in the Soviet Union as well. In 1986, Vanunu, a former technician at the Israeli nuclear weapons facility in Dimona, was kidnapped in Italy by the Mossad secret police, thrown into a desert prison in Ashkelon and sentenced to 18 years by a secret military court for revealing to the London *Sunday Times* that Israel had amassed upwards of 200 nuclear warheads. Vanunu's disclosures were a service to all humanity.

Israel's possession of nuclear weapons had been an open secret for years, but these were believed to be a small arsenal of bombs. In fact, Israel had stockpiled the world's sixth-largest nuclear arsenal. This arsenal was built up with the active support of the French and then the U.S. imperialist powers, as part of their war drive against the Soviet degenerated workers state.

Vanunu was born to a Sephardic Jewish family that emigrated from Morocco to Israel, where he experienced discrimination at the hands of the European-derived Ashkenazi establishment. As a student at Beersheba's Ben-Gurion University, Vanunu joined protests against Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon and actively fought for the rights of Palestinian and Bedouin students. Fed up with the Zionist garrison state, Vanunu left Israel in January 1986 and later converted to Christianity while he was in Australia. In a 1990 decision affirming Vanunu's guilt, three Supreme Court judges of the Israeli semi-theocratic state pronounced him "a loner...[who] could not find his place in Israeli society."

Vanunu has been given the kind of treatment the Zionist rulers reserve for those they deem "subhuman"—the Palestinians imprisoned within the electric fences that surround Gaza, those confined behind the three-story-high concrete walls and checkpoints of the West Bank and the thousands who languish in Israel's prison torture chambers. Vanunu spent over eleven years in solitary confinement in a six by nine cell in a high-security complex built for Palestinians.

When he walked out of his desert dungeon in 2004, Vanunu was not a free man, but he was resolute. Upon his release, he said he was "proud and happy to do what I did." He said that despite the "very cruel and barbaric treatment" meted out by the Israeli security authorities they "didn't succeed to break me, you didn't succeed to make me crazy."

Reuters

Mordechai Vanunu defiant as he leaves prison after serving an 18-year sentence, April 2004.

Vanunu continued to defiantly denounce the Israeli doomsday machine. In an August 2004 interview with Amy Goodman on *Democracy Now!* he said: "I'm very happy and glad that I...let all the world and the Israeli people see the true face of Israel who used to remind the world 'holocaust, holocaust' every hour, every day, but in fact Israel [has] a holocaust factory." Three months later, Vanunu was arrested again.

The International Communist League and the Partisan Defense Committee have actively fought for Vanunu's freedom, and against the continued attacks and onerous restrictions placed on him. He should not have spent even one day behind bars. Mordechai Vanunu warned the world that the Zionist rulers are not only willing to plunge the world into a thermonuclear holocaust, but have the means to do so. Hands off Mordechai Vanunu! Let him leave Israel!

University of Pittsburgh Press

Nationalist Jangali leaders meeting with Bolshevik emissaries at Anzali, Gilan Province, Iran, 1920.

capitalist countries of the West and Japan.

These considerations pertain with full force in the Near East. As Trotsky noted in the *Third International After Lenin*, "The further East we go, the lower and viler becomes the bourgeoisie, the greater are the tasks that fall upon the proletariat."

Probably in no other country of the East has the prospect of proletarian revolution been more directly linked to the Russian Revolution than in Iran. As early as 1905, the first Russian Revolution—a "dress rehearsal" for 1917—stirred a massive response to the south in Iran. Though class relations were less developed in the Persian empire, with the proletariat still tiny, what became known as Iran's "Constitutional Revolution" led to sweeping social struggle. While dominated by rich merchants and the high clergy (ulema), the revolution generated a plebeian uprising centered in Iranian Azerbaijan. But by 1909 the merchants and ulema formed a joint government with representatives of the Shah.

The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution again produced mass upheavals in Iran, which were initially suppressed by the occupying British army. This period saw the formation of the Adalat (Justice) Party, progenitor of the first Communist Party of Persia and again centered in Azerbaijan. Mass protests against the British spread across the country, especially in the northern province of Gilan. When the British were forced to withdraw in 1920, a pan-Turkish and pan-Islamic nationalist movement called Jangali welcomed the arrival of Soviet troops and set up a self-styled "Gilan Soviet Republic." The nascent Persian Communists initially supported Jangali in a coalition government, but this soon led to debate and reconsideration.

The establishment of the "Gilan Soviet Republic" came on the eve of the Second Congress of the Communist International (Comintern), founded by Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party in the wake of the October Revolution. Developments in Iran provided something of a laboratory condition for discussions on the national and colonial questions at the Congress, in particular on the relationship between bourgeois-nationalist movements and nascent Communist parties in underdeveloped countries.

In his "Draft Theses on the National and Colonial Questions," Lenin demanded "a determined struggle against attempts to give a communist colouring to bourgeois-democratic liberation trends in the backward countries." He continued: "The Communist International should support bourgeois-democratic national movements in the colonial and backward countries only on condition that, in these countries, the elements of future proletarian parties, which will be communist not only in name, are brought together and trained to understand their special tasks, i.e., those of the struggle against the bourgeois-democratic movements within their own nations."

Lenin's somewhat algebraic formula reflected the fact that the question of relations between Communist and bourgeois nationalist forces in semicolonial countries had yet to be subjected to a decisive historical test. (Russia, while economically backward, was itself an imperialist power.) Founding Iranian Communist Ahmed Sultanzadeh intervened at the Congress to add a cautionary warning that was to prove prescient, and not only for Iran. He said:

> "It seems to me that the point in the theses that envisions supporting the bourgeois-democratic movement in the backward countries can apply only to countries where this movement is still embryonic. If we were to proceed in accordance with the theses in countries where we already have ten or more years of experience behind us or where bourgeois democracy is a prop and a foundation of the state, as in Persia, that would mean driving the masses into the arms of the counterrevolution. We must create and support a purely communist movement counterposed to the bourgeois-democratic movement."

A few months later, the coalition between the nationalists and Communists in Gilan effectively disintegrated, and soon after a Russian Cossack adventurer, Reza Khan, encouraged by the British, staged a coup in Tehran. A few years later this counterrevolutionary Cossack proclaimed himself the Shah, founder of the new, "eternal" Pahlavi dynasty. The Gilan experience demonstrated the limitations in which Communists could work with bourgeois-democratic and nationalist movements. A military united front between the nascent Communist Party and Jangali against the British was certainly principled, helping to force a British withdrawal and establish a bridgehead for the Bolshevik Revolution into Iran. But the ***political*** alliance between the forces in a common government was disastrous, for once the British occupation forces were removed, the programs of the Communists and nationalists were shown to be completely incompatible.

Stalinism and Iranian Communism

The rise of Stalinism in the USSR had a direct and very negative impact on the communist movement in Iran. In 1923-24, amid a wave of demoralization that followed the defeat of revolutionary opportunities in West Europe, a nationalist bureaucratic caste under J.V. Stalin became dominant in the Soviet Union. Abandoning the revolutionary internationalism that animated the October Revolution, by late 1924 Stalin began propagating the anti-Marxist dogma that "socialism" could be built in one country. This led to a search for "peaceful coexistence" with the imperialists, and eventually to complete abandonment of the fight for socialist revolution. Trotsky and other Bolshevik cadres formed the Left Opposition to oppose this, remaining true to proletarian revolutionary Marxism.

During the 1920s and 30s, the Iranian Communists engaged in heroic underground work under the Shah, for example leading a general strike in the oil fields of southwestern Khuzistan in 1929. But the formation of the Tudeh Party in 1941 by left-wing intellectuals formerly associated with the Persian Communist Party took place under the anti-revolutionary, class-collaborationist perspective of the Stalinized Comintern. Tudeh insisted that, because of Iran's economic backwardness, the proletariat could not take power in its own name. They argued that there must be a "two-stage revolution," the first stage of which would be led by the "progressive" or "anti-imperialist" bourgeoisie and limited to solving democratic capitalist tasks. Socialist revolution, they claimed, would come in the distant, unspecified future. This "two-stage" line was repeatedly put to the test over the ensuing decades, with disastrous results for Iran's toiling masses.

By 1946, Tudeh claimed tens of thousands of members and some 400,000

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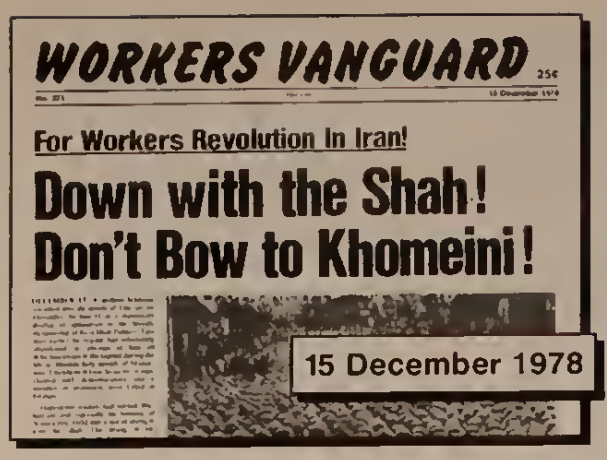


During 1978-79 political upheaval in Iran, Spartacists advanced perspective of proletarian revolution while pseudo-socialists such as the U.S. International Socialist Organization hailed Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution," even as his regime murdered leftists and national minorities. Center: Executions in Kurdistan, 1979.

Reza/Sipa

Iran...

(continued from page 9)

workers in affiliated unions. Its strength was concentrated in north Iran since it had consciously discouraged organization in the south, then controlled by Britain. This was in line with Stalin's subordination and suppression of class struggle in the "democratic" imperialist countries and their colonies in World War II. Nonetheless, there is no question that by the end of the war Iran had entered a prerevolutionary situation in which Tudeh could have taken power. The Tudeh-led unions effectively made up the government in north Iran—collecting taxes, providing security and judicial functions, issuing travel permits, etc. The presence of the Soviet Red Army, which entered this part of Iran in 1941, provided an enormous impetus to social upheaval. But this was not the revolutionary army of Lenin and Trotsky, and Tudeh was not a revolutionary party.

As a pressure tactic to wrest oil and gas concessions from the Iranian government, Stalin helped establish a "Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan" under the leadership of a bourgeois-nationalist figure, and Tudeh and its affiliated unions entered the governing party there. This was a class-collaborationist popular front par excellence, stretching all the way from mullahs and tribal leaders to Stalinist union organizers. While the Democratic Republic carried out some significant reforms in its one year of existence —for example, women got the right to vote for the first time—the regime kept agrarian reform very limited in order to maintain the alliance with bourgeois forces linked to the landlords.

The Soviet Stalinists did not want a social revolution in Azerbaijan on the USSR's southern border, for this would pose pointblank the question of political power in Tehran and upset Stalin's game plan for "coexistence" with Anglo-American imperialism. Azerbaijan was to be bartered for a supposedly friendly regime in Tehran. An agreement was signed for the withdrawal of Soviet troops in exchange for a joint Iran-Soviet oil company. An unwritten clause was that Tudeh would use its great authority in the proletariat to enforce class peace.

That clause was soon activated. On the heels of a successful strike by oil workers in Khuzistan, the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company tried to whip up antagonisms between Arab and Persian workers in order to break the pro-Tudeh unions. In self-defense, a general strike was called for July 1946. In the wake of bloody street fighting, Tudeh militias took over the key city of Abadan. At that point, Tudeh sent its general secretary and the secretary of the union federation to call off the strike, even though the workers' demands had not been met.

As a reward, three Tudeh members were brought into the bourgeois cabinet. But they were purged only two months later, and the central government arrested hundreds of Tudeh activists, occupied its headquarters and banned its press. Having broken the back of the party in the capital, the government then launched an invasion of Azerbaijan, where the Soviet-allied government surrendered without a fight. The opportunity for an Iranian socialist revolution was sacrificed on the altar of Stalin's search for "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism.

Even after this, Tudeh retained great authority among the masses. In 1950, the *New York Herald Tribune* reported that over a third of the Iranian population "either favor the local communist party or prefer it to the ruling oligarchy." Soon, the oil nationalization crisis under the regime of Mossadeq would again create an opportunity to overthrow that oligarchy—but Tudeh again betrayed the aspirations of the masses.

Mossadeq and the 1953 CIA Coup

Mossadeq, a wealthy landowner and member of the Iranian aristocracy, rose to power in the same period as Nehru in India, Sukarno in Indonesia and Nasser in Egypt. The bloodletting of the imperialist adversaries in World War II provided an opening for the colonial masses to rise up and make a bid for national independence. But these nationalist movements frequently saw in the United States a potential ally against the older colonial powers like Britain, France and the Netherlands.

Mossadeq's National Front was a thoroughly bourgeois party with both secular and religious wings—over a third of its first parliamentary delegation were mullahs. It was thus an unstable bloc of the traditional clerical-dominated bourgeoisie of the bazaar and the modern state-subsidized technocratic bourgeoisie, temporarily united by opposition to the British and the demand to nationalize the oil industry. And ***both*** wings assiduously courted American imperialism.

While the Stalinists were initially hostile to Mossadeq's National Front, deriding it for "dancing to the tune of imperialistic America," they also led mass demonstrations and strikes demanding oil nationalization. Faced with the wave of militancy, the Shah appointed Mossadeq prime minister in April 1951 and he nationalized the oil industry a month later. In response, the world oil cartel refused to buy Iranian oil, depriving the country of its main source of export earnings and strangling the economy.

Despite Mossadeq's pro-American proclivities, it was the duty of revolutionaries to defend the oil nationalization against imperialist retaliation, just as Trotsky supported the more radical expropriation of British oil interests in Mexico in the 1930s. An independent proletarian class policy would have meant defending such anti-imperialist *acts* while giving absolutely no political support to the bourgeois-nationalist, anti-working-class regime that carried them out. Mossadeq sought to suppress the continuing wave of strikes and did not touch the barbaric feudal social relations in the countryside. But amid the social turmoil, by 1952 Tudeh decided to throw its lot in with Mossadeq's party and backed his return to power. When the right-wing clerical forces split and went over to the royalist opposition, Tudeh called mass protests that outnumbered those of the National Front by a factor of 10 or 15 to one.

By August 1953, almost every observer commented that Tudeh could have taken power if they so desired. But the Stalinists looked to Mossadeq to carry through the "democratic revolution"—Mossadeq instead called on the army to suppress Tudeh. In the course of this, the army went over to the mullah-royalist bloc, which, working closely with the CIA, proceeded to overthrow the regime and reinstall the hated Shah.

The long-term effect of the August 1953 coup and the repression that followed was to deepen the party's opportunism, paving its way to become shock troops for clerical reaction in the late 1970s. By then, with the Shah's regime unraveling, Tudeh was painting the Islamic clergy in "anti-imperialist" colors. Thus they again blinded their working-class base to the grave dangers they faced in the event of a mullah victory, setting the workers up for brutal suppression. In fact, in the early years of the mullah regime, Tudeh cadre went so far as to fight shoulder to shoulder with the regime's murderous *pasdaran* and fascistic *hezbollahi* thugs in killing other leftists.

EPA

Police enforcing Islamic dress code in Tehran, 23 April 2007.

The 1979 "Islamic Revolution"

By the 1970s, a kaleidoscope of new groups with stances at least nominally to the left of Tudeh began winning support among Iranian youth. But none of these groups transcended the "two-stage revolution" schema. The Fedayeen, for example, called for unity of all anti-Shah forces regardless of their class character or political program:

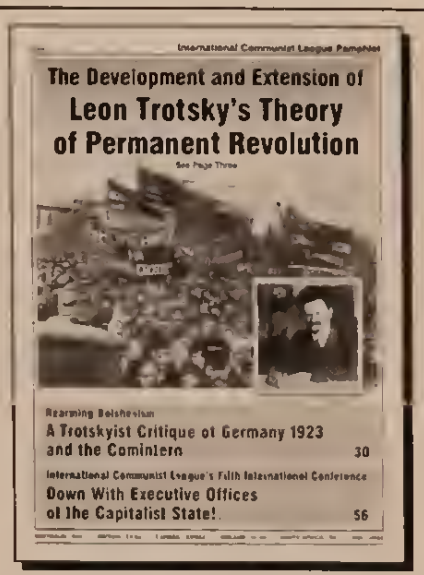
> "We must use the intellectuals, the petit-bourgeoisie, together with any other anti-dictatorship elements, be they progressive or reactionary, for the mobilization of the toiling masses, namely, the main force for a people's democratic revolution."
>
> —Bizhan Jazani, *Iran...The Socio-Economic Analysis of a Dependent Capitalist State* (1973)

For its part, the HKS (Socialist Workers Party), a pseudo-Trotskyist outfit associated with the USec, also portrayed Khomeini as an "anti-imperialist" and supported his rise to power. The HKS even tried to present its credentials as a loyal social-democratic adjunct to the mullah dictatorship by running in the August 1979 election for the regime's "Assembly of Experts," a body whose explicit purpose was to help institutionalize the Islamic Republic. One month later, the HKS along with all other left and secular organizations was declared illegal, its press banned and its leaders thrown in jail.

Everywhere, the dogma of "two-stage revolution" has produced only disaster for the working people. But Stalin and his cronies at least claimed they were giving support to modernizing bourgeois forces. For example, during the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, Stalin and his henchmen directed the Chinese Communist Party to subordinate itself to the bourgeois-nationalist Guomindang of Chiang Kai-shek, arguing that this was a step toward consummating the supposed "first stage" of the revolution. This was justified by the fact that the Guomindang was seen as a bourgeois-nationalist modernizing party that, for example, decried the binding of women's feet. The result of this Stalinist betrayal was the slaughter of tens of thousands of Communists and workers in Chiang's Shanghai massacre of April 1927.

But what claim to modernism could the caste of mullahs in Iran possibly have had? The reactionary character of the Islamic opposition was manifest from the outset, above all by its position on the woman question.

During the 1978-79 events, we intervened wherever we could among the substantial Iranian exile left milieus, waging the necessary urgent and sharply polemical struggle for a proletarian perspective. I recall mass demonstrations of tens of thousands in London, where religious thugs and British fake-leftists united to try and exclude us because of our warnings against Islamic reaction. A comrade recently described to me how in France, which also had a large exile milieu, he and a companion used to distribute our press every week to mass Iranian leftist gatherings at the Cité Universitaire in Paris. As the weeks passed, religious forces steadily increased their presence, until finally they became dominant.



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The hegemony of the mullahs over the anti-Shah upheaval was far from preordained. The last few months of 1978 saw a major strike wave, most importantly by the strategic oil workers. Big wage settlements did nothing to stem the upsurge, which paralyzed the economy. Initially these strikes were *not* subordinated to the Islamic opposition and did *not* support the call for an Islamic Republic. From his exile in France, Khomeini sent a top aide to try and get the strikers to disband their independent strike committees and subordinate themselves to the "Islamic movement." Criminally, the Iranian left did nothing to stop this—to the contrary, they also worked to amalgamate the left and right oppositions to the Shah in the name of "unity."

As we warned in a major article titled "Down With the Shah! Down With the Mullahs!" (*WV* No. 219, 17 November 1978):

> "There is no common denominator between the demands of the mullahs and those of the strikers.... The mullahs' opposition to the shah is a reactionary one, no matter how it plays on the crimes of the shah's dictatorship. The fanatical hatred of social advances since the time of the prophet Muhammed (the seventh century A.D.!) has its parallels in the military-based régimes of Pakistan or Libya and in the region-wide revival of religious obscurantism and its vicious oppression of women."

In the end, it was the workers strikes that sounded the death knell for the Pahlavi dynasty, not the martyrs who claimed to die for Allah. But without an authoritative Leninist vanguard party to lead the working class, these struggles only ended up serving as a battering ram to bring to power the deeply anti-proletarian Shi'ite clergy.

What of the working class in the current protests? There have been a number of strikes and sit-ins in recent years, for example to demand unpaid wages, and individual workers have no doubt participated in the protests. But there is no sign that any section of the Iranian working class has intervened to assert its *independent* class interests against the Islamic regime. Two statements by workers groups in Iran, widely circulated on the Internet, are indicative. One, signed by "Laborers of Iran Khodro," the largest automotive company in the Near East, called for a 30-minute protest strike in "solidarity with the movement of the people of Iran." Another, by the Vahed Syndicate, representing Tehran bus workers, similarly expressed support for "the movement of Iranian people to build a free and independent civil society."

RGAKFD

Humbert-Droz Archives

Above: Red Army soldiers celebrating first anniversary of Russian Revolution in Moscow under banner hailing "Communism," November 1918. Right: Baku Women's Union in Soviet Azerbaijan marched with banner linking "liberation of women" with "liberation of the world's toilers," 1920.

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Iran remains a hellhole for women. After coming to power, the theocratic rulers reimposed the compulsory *hijab* (headscarf) for women in public. Those who flouted the edict were subjected to 74 lashes or a year's imprisonment. A man's testimony was deemed worth twice that of a woman. Lashings and amputations were applied by the courts, and women convicted of adultery could be subject to stoning. Child marriage was reintroduced, while laws encouraged polygamy and prevented women from leaving abusive husbands. The husband's right of unilateral divorce was reinstated.

Nevertheless, modern practices have seeped into Iran. While child marriage was reintroduced, the average age of first marriages for women has continued to rise from about 19 before 1979 to 24 today. Literacy rates now exceed 95 percent for both sexes, and the majority of college students are women. But despite these trends, women constitute only 15 percent of the formal-sector paid labor force. The 2006 Iranian census revealed that only 3.5 million Iranian women were salaried workers, compared with 23.5 million men.

During an earlier wave of protests in Iran six years ago, we wrote an article laying out our perspective for women's liberation through socialist revolution:

> "In the countries of the East, the question of women's oppression is one of the most powerful motor forces of socialist revolution. Indeed, when the Bolsheviks arrived in Central Asia in the years following the October Revolution, it was among women that they found the main point of support for their program and won their key cadres. The same holds true for Iran. A Leninist-Trotskyist party, championing women's rights against the age-old stranglehold of religion and the family, will find its most loyal and courageous fighters among women."
>
> —"For Workers Revolution in Iran!" *WV* No. 807 (1 August 2003)

Those are some crucial elements of our proletarian revolutionary program for Iran. What about the reformist left? These forces are repeating the treacherous policies of 30 years ago by lining up behind one or another wing of the ruling clergy. The remnants of Tudeh openly called to vote for Moussavi, an individual whose hands are covered with the blood of their own comrades. The Iranian Revolutionary Marxists' Tendency, associated with Alan Woods & Co., appealed in a June 16 open letter to Moussavi: "You must either side with the people who voted for you or with the *vali-e faghih* [the Supreme Leader] (and the repressive apparatus of the state). Being at the service of the people would mean that you should cut your links with the whole state apparatus." The idea that Moussavi and his cohorts could be "at the service of the people" is a cruel hoax and illusion.

In North America, some left groups have sided with the pro-Ahmadinejad wing of the clerics, claiming that in this way they are opposing U.S. imperialism. The Vancouver-based MAWO [Mobilization Against War and Occupation] group, the political bandits who produce the World Socialist Web Site and the U.S. Workers World Party all have a pronounced pro-regime tilt, and in some cases give Ahmadinejad open support against his rivals. Thus a *Workers World* article (17 June 2009) claims that "The Iranian people have benefited enormously from their revolution and cannot easily be turned back" and that Ahmadinejad's "side is more anti-imperialist."

This is an utter crock. For all their demagogy (and vile anti-Semitism), Ahmadinejad and the other Iranian rulers worked *alongside* U.S. imperialism in supporting the repressive "war on terror" and in the early stages of the occupation of Iraq. At the same time, the regime has been busy privatizing whole sectors of the Iranian economy while presiding over mass unemployment and growing poverty.

The best known Iranian exile left group is probably the Worker-Communist Party of Iran (WCPI), which over the past few years has split into three competing "parties" with barely distinguishable differences. Unlike Tudeh, the WCPI denounces both wings of the clerical regime. But they also have a long history of appealing to the imperialist powers—far greater enemies of the world's oppressed than the ayatollahs of neocolonial Iran—as potential allies against the Islamic rulers.

In a June 22 Web posting, the WCPI boasted that party leader Hamid Taqvaee "wrote to heads of states and the UN Secretary General on behalf of the people of Iran calling on governments 'to immediately break all political ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran, shut down its embassies and consulates and ensure its expulsion from the United Nations and other international institutions'." More recently, a WCPI protest outside the UN called upon the imperialist governments to arrest Ahmadinejad. The reactionary nature of such appeals to "democratic" imperialism played out in Iraq in 2003, when the WCPI *supported the imperialist occupation of that country*, calling only to replace U.S. troops with "the intervention of the United Nations." This is the same UN whose starvation sanctions led to the death of one and a half million Iraqis.

The WCPI does prominently raise the key issue of women's rights and opposes the veil. Yet following the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan in 1979 against a CIA-backed Islamic fundamentalist insurgency, the WCPI viewed the Red Army as just as reactionary as the *mujahedin* holy warriors. They joined most of the left in refusing to support the Soviet intervention, justifying this by the false claim that the Soviet Union became "state capitalist" by the mid 1920s.

We Trotskyists unconditionally defended the Soviet degenerated workers state against imperialism and internal counterrevolution, while calling for proletarian political revolution to oust the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy. We said "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" and called for extending the social gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples. We pointed out that the Red Army intervention was objectively in defense of the Soviet Union and a blow against the imperialist-backed Islamic fundamentalists who threatened to return women to virtual slavery. At the same time, we warned that the Kremlin bureaucracy could well end up selling out to the imperialists. Indeed, the Kremlin's withdrawal from Afghanistan in the late 1980s paved the way for the victory of the CIA's cutthroats, with hideous consequences for Afghan women, and gave a giant impulse to the forces of capitalist restoration that triumphed in the Soviet Union.

We wrote the following in our International Declaration of Principles, adopted in 1998 (reprinted in *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998):

> "The 1979 'Iranian Revolution' opened up a period of ascendant political Islam in the historically Muslim world, a development which contributed to and was powerfully reinforced by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union. Khomeini's seizure and consolidation of power in Iran was a defeat akin to Hitler's crushing of the German proletariat in 1933, albeit on a narrower, regional scale."

It is necessary to learn the lessons of history and begin anew the struggle for Marxist clarity and leadership. The only road to genuine social and economic modernization, to liberating Iran from imperialist subjugation, freeing women from enslavement, winning the right of self-determination for the Kurds and the other oppressed nationalities, lies in the smashing of capitalist class rule. The Iranian masses urgently need an internationalist, working-class revolutionary party capable of leading this struggle. To forge such a party, leftist militants must understand the roots of the betrayals by those misleaders who helped prepare a historic defeat by embracing the forces of Islamic reaction as a "progressive" alternative to the Shah. Down with Ahmadinejad—No support to Moussavi! Imperialist hands off Iran! For workers revolution!■

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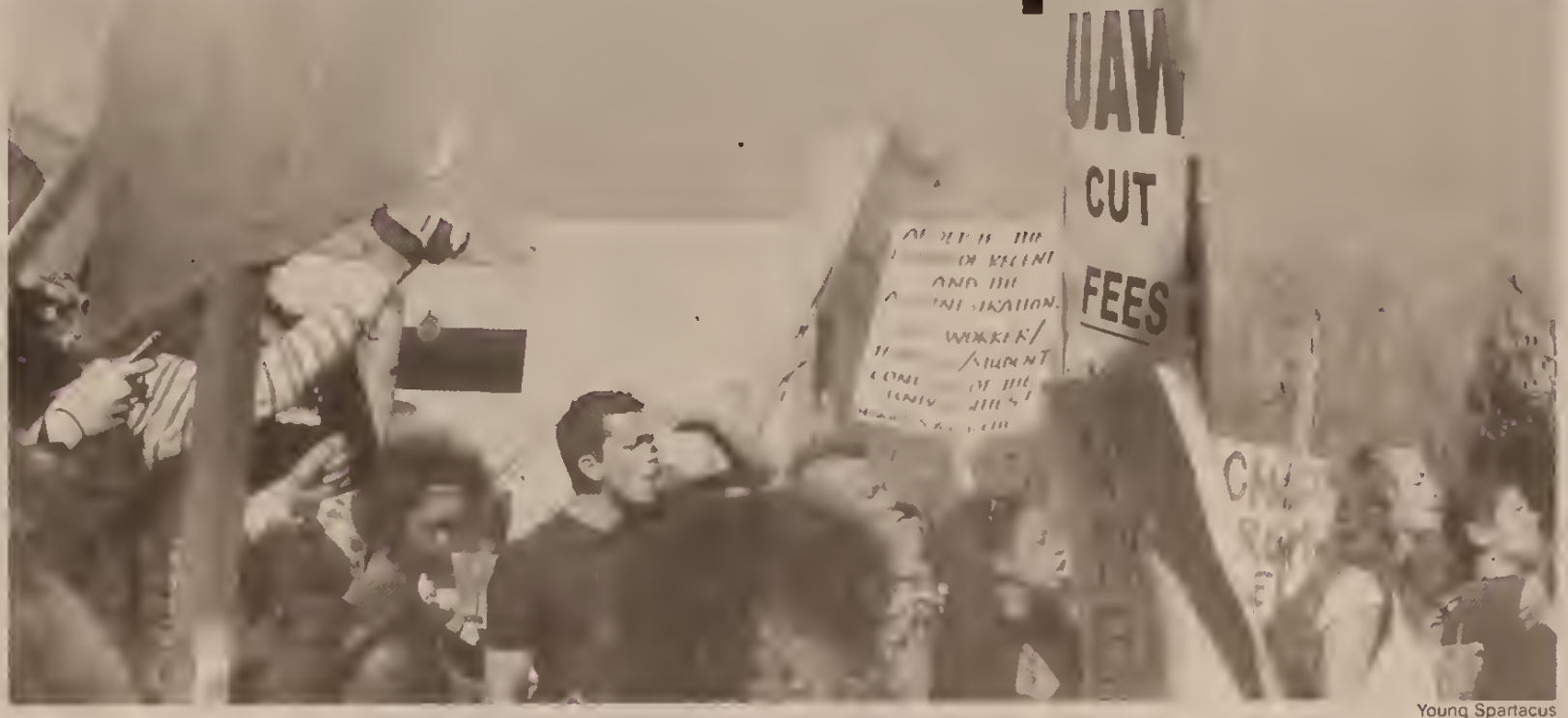
Protests Against Education Cuts and Fee Hikes Sweep California



Young Spartacus

Protest outside the Board of Regents meeting at UCLA, 19 November 2009.

Students Must Mobilize Behind the Social Power of the Working Class! Break with the Democrats!

In the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, universities across the country have been hit with increasingly devastating blows: tuition has skyrocketed, budgets are being slashed and faculty and workers are being laid off in droves. In California, the world's eighth-largest economy, there have been nearly $10 billion in cuts to education. These attacks are aimed against the working class, blacks, immigrants and the poor, who have been priced out of university education or on the receiving end of racist purges with the elimination of affirmative action programs. In 2008, black students were only 1 percent of the undergraduates at UCLA!

Young Spartacus

Last November, the Board of Regents of the elite University of California (UC) raised tuition by 32 percent, so attending the University of California will now cost triple what it did a decade ago. By next fall, tuition alone will cost more than a whopping $10,000 a year for in-state students, slamming the door shut to "public" higher education for thousands of youth. At the California State Universities (CSUs) and community colleges, fees have gone up by 30 percent this year. At the same time, these colleges, where there are substantial numbers of black and minority students, are reducing enrollment—according to the CSU Trustees' plan, by 40,000 students over the next two years! Ballooning class sizes, axing student aid and cutting "unprofitable" department programs are also part of the package. Even if you can get into the California system, graduating will be harder and your debt higher. Today, paying back student loans has become a new form of indentured servitude.

Campus workers, some of whom are not unionized, are also being hit hard. Two thousand UC workers have already been laid off, and those who kept their jobs have been forced to accept wage cuts and mandatory furlough days. The university has threatened "temporary layoffs" against the CUE (Coalition of University Employees) and UPTE (University Professional and Technical Employees) unions, whose contracts expired in 2008. As part of their overall union-busting scheme, the university bosses have especially targeted union activists for layoffs. While faculty and university employees are being told there is "no money," administrators and staff executives are generously lining their pockets with bonuses and kickbacks. Mark Yudof, the widely hated UC president, makes more than $900,000 a year, and UC chancellors rake in as much as $450,000 a year plus their campus mansions.

In response to cuts in education, large, integrated protests have erupted around the country, most dramatically on campuses across California. Last September 24, over 5,000 people protested at UC Berkeley in the biggest demonstration on that campus in years. On November 19, the day the Regents met at UCLA to approve the 32 percent fee hike, some 2,000 students along with contingents of unionized workers protested; at UC Berkeley, students joined with UPTE in a two-day strike and walkout, followed by an occupation of Wheeler Hall on the third day. Hundreds also protested or carried out occupations at UC Santa Cruz and UC Davis. The occupations were met with an army of riot gear-equipped cops. At UC Berkeley demonstrators were bludgeoned with batons, while at UCLA at least one student was shot directly in the chest with a taser gun. In all, more than 110 protesters were arrested (see "Police Assault UC Protesters," *WV* No. 948, 4 December 2009). *Cops off campus!*

In December, students at UC Berkeley reoccupied Wheeler Hall to transform the "dead week" before finals into a "live week." Students at San Francisco State University (SFSU) occupied the Business building and renamed it for Oscar Grant, a young black father executed on New Year's Day 2009 by a Bay Area Rapid Transit cop. Cops raided both buildings in the middle of the night, arresting 26 at SFSU and 66 at UC Berkeley. After a protest at the chancellor's house at Berkeley, another eight were arrested on multiple charges, including attempted arson and felony vandalism. Ominously, California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger accused the students of a "type of terrorism." *Hands off the protesters!* As the Bay Area Spartacus Youth Club wrote in a December 21 protest letter to the university administrations and the Alameda County D.A., "these arrests again make clear the class nature of the campus administration, who are the representatives and enforcers of bourgeois rule on campus. *We stand in solidarity with the protesters and demand that all protesters be released and all the charges be dropped now!*"

A statewide and a national call have been issued for a March 4 "Strike and Day of Action to Defend Public Education" to protest cuts, layoffs, fee hikes and the shrinking numbers of blacks and minority students on the campuses. Various coalitions are calling to make March 4 a major walkout, including with appeals to unions. The SYCs will intervene into this protest, as we have at previous ones, with a class-struggle program that points the way toward overthrowing the very system that is responsible for the attacks on education: capitalism.

For Free, Quality, Integrated Education for All!

Our revolutionary perspective was laid out by a Spartacus Youth Club spokesman

continued on page 5

Lara Brucker/Daily Californian

Police attack demonstrators at UC Berkeley during occupation of Wheeler Hall, 20 November 2009.

WORKERS VANGUARD

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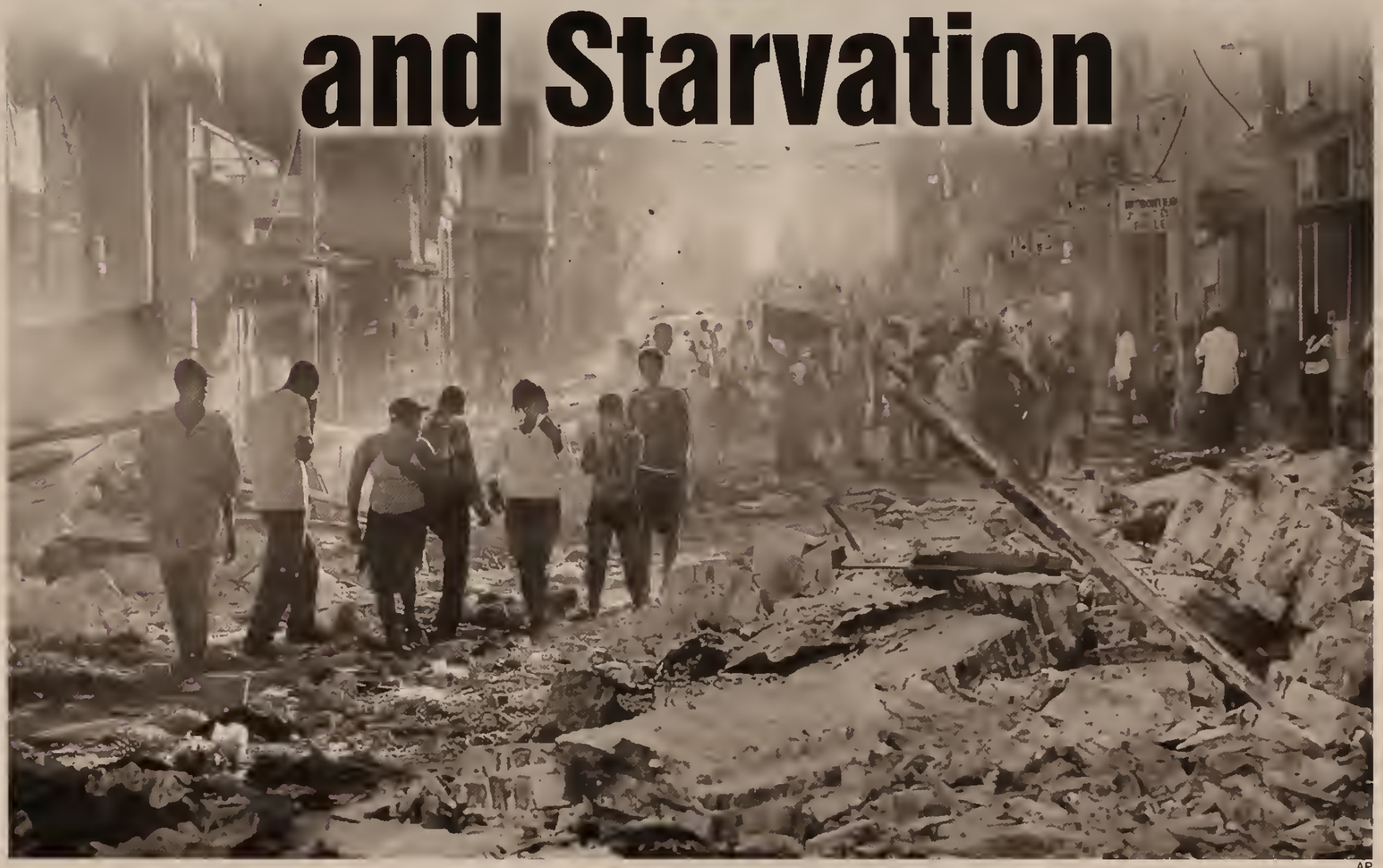
Haiti Earthquake Horror:
Imperialism, Racism and Starvation



AP

Port-au-Prince on January 16, four days after the earthquake.

JANUARY 25—Any country whose capital was struck by an earthquake registering 7.0 on the Richter scale would suffer grave damage, but Haiti's unimaginable toll of death and destruction is a measure of the poverty inflicted upon it by the racist imperialist overlords. Upwards of 200,000 are believed to be dead and many more die every day from lack of food and clean water and untreated infections. Up to three million people are rendered homeless, trying to survive on the streets amid the rubble. Doctors and nurses who flew in to aid in the relief effort are performing operations in makeshift open-air "hospitals," often without anesthetic or even material to sterilize their equipment. The ramshackle state administration, such as it was, has collapsed, with the government now operating out of a police outpost at the airport.

The poorest country in the hemisphere, Haiti was totally exposed to the earthquake's impact. Even before the earthquake struck, the unemployment rate was as high as 80 percent, more than half the population lived on less than one dollar a day and nearly one out of every two Haitians had no regular access to drinking water. With little in the way of an indigenous working class, many Haitians rely on remittances from Haitian workers in the U.S., Canada and elsewhere, which amount to nearly a quarter of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Many people lived in tin shacks that collapsed when the quake hit, and many of the concrete buildings were constructed so shoddily that they simply "pancaked."

Given the impoverishment and lack of infrastructure, the Haitian population now finds itself totally reliant on international aid efforts. Thousands of medical and search-and-rescue volunteers from many countries rushed to Haiti to provide assistance. At the same time, the United Nations augmented its 9,000-strong occupation force with an additional 3,500 soldiers, while the Obama administration is rushing in 10,000 troops as well as military aircraft and a flotilla of naval vessels. While reformist "socialists" like the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and Workers World Party (WWP) call for the U.S. to provide aid without the exercise of American military might, we have no such illusions. Indeed, American forces in Haiti have made "security" a higher priority than providing aid. While many planes carrying aid have landed at the Port-au-Prince airport, which is now controlled by U.S. forces, others were criminally diverted as the U.S. gave landing priority to planes carrying military personnel.

Farrell/Miami Herald

Anguish over small child being removed from rubble.

Against the backdrop of the brutal occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq as well as the escalating air strikes in Pakistan, the Haiti "relief effort" provides the Obama administration with a means to refurbish the "humanitarian" image of U.S. imperialism. As we have often pointed out, after eight years of the oddly demented regime of George W. Bush, which reveled in imperialist arrogance and barbarity, Obama is well suited to help provide a facelift for U.S. imperialism's tarnished image around the world. Yet whether the Commander-in-Chief is a Democrat or Republican, U.S. imperialism remains the most bloody and rapacious imperialist power on the face of the planet. Obama's "humanitarian" pretensions in Haiti are but a thin veneer on racist oppression and imperialist subjugation.

One of the central aims of the U.S. imperialist rulers is to prevent Haitians from fleeing the island. Thus, the U.S. quickly launched a full-scale naval

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For the Communism of Lenin, Luxemburg and Liebknecht

In January we commemorate the "Three L's": Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin, who died on 21 January 1924, and revolutionary Marxist leaders Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, who were assassinated on 15 January 1919 in Germany by the reactionary Freikorps. This was done as part of the suppression of the Spartakist uprising by the Social Democratic government of Friedrich Ebert, Philipp Scheidemann and Gustav Noske. We reprint below an appreciation of Luxemburg excerpted from Max Shachtman's "Under the Banner of Marxism," which was written in response to the resignation of Ernest Erber and originally published in Volume IV, Number 1 of the internal bulletins of the Workers Party in 1949.

Shachtman joined the American Communist Party in the early 1920s. Along with James P. Cannon and Martin Abern, he was expelled in 1928 for fighting for the Bolshevik-Leninist line of Leon Trotsky against the Stalinist degeneration of the international Communist movement. For a decade he was, with Cannon, a leader of the American Trotskyist movement as well as a key leader in the International Left Opposition. However, following an intense faction fight in the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party, Shachtman, along with Abern and James Burnham, broke from Trotskyism in 1940, refusing to defend the Soviet degenerated workers state in World War II. Shortly thereafter, he developed the position that the USSR was a new exploitative form of class society, "bureaucratic collectivism." (For more on this fight, see Trotsky's *In Defense of Marxism* and Cannon's *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party.*)

Following this split, Shachtman formed the Workers Party, which was a rightward-moving centrist party that existed from 1940 to 1949, when it changed its name to the Independent Socialist League. Under the intense pressure of U.S. imperialism's anti-Soviet Cold War, Shachtman came to see Stalinism as a greater danger than "democratic" imperialism. He ended his days as an open supporter of U.S. imperialism and a member of the Democratic Party, backing the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba and the vicious, losing imperialist war against the Vietnamese social revolution.

Shachtman's 1949 reply to Erber (who went on to become an urban planner in Northern New Jersey) represented the last time he tried to defend revolutionary Marxism against a classical Menshevik. In resigning from the Workers Party, Erber, using stock-in-trade social-democratic arguments to justify support for one's "own" bourgeoisie, denounced the Bolshevik Revolution and counterposed Luxemburg to Lenin, portraying her as a defender of classless "democracy." Many self-styled leftists continue to do likewise, distorting Luxemburg's 1918 criticisms of the Bolsheviks, which she never published in her lifetime and which were based on the very partial information to which she had access while imprisoned for her revolutionary struggle against the First World War. Using previously untranslated articles from the German Communist journal *Rote Fahne* written by Luxemburg near the end of her life, Shachtman demonstrated her support to the Russian Revolution and how she and Lenin stood shoulder to shoulder in the fight for socialist revolution.

M.S. Nappelbaum

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* * *

Contrast Erber *and every word he writes* with the *critical* appraisal of the Bolsheviks written in prison by Rosa Luxemburg, who is invoked against revolutionary socialism nowadays by every turncoat and backslider who wouldn't reach up to her soles if he stood on tiptoes:

> "That the Bolsheviks have based their policy entirely upon the world proletarian revolution is the clearest proof of their political farsightedness and firmness of principle and of the bold scope of their policies."

You will never see *that* quoted from the turncoats who have drafted Luxemburg into the crusade against Bolshevism against her will. Nor will you see *this* quoted:

> "The party of Lenin was the only one which grasped the mandate and duty of a truly revolutionary party and which, by the slogan—'All power in the hands of the proletariat and peasantry'—insured the continued development of the revolution....
>
> "Moreover, the Bolsheviks immediately set as the aim of this seizure of power a complete, far-reaching revolutionary program: not the safeguarding of bourgeois democracy, but a dictatorship of the proletariat for the purpose of realizing socialism. Thereby they won for themselves the imperishable historic distinction of having for the first time proclaimed the final aim of socialism as the direct program of practical politics."

We can see now how much right Erber has to drag Rosa Luxemburg into court as a fellow-detractor of the Bolsheviks, how much right he has to mention her views in the same breath with his own. Fortunately, Luxemburg is not a defenseless corpse. She left a rich political testament to assure her name from being bandied about hy soiled lips. Read this, directed right at the heart of Erber:

> "The real situation in which the Russian Revolution found itself, narrowed down in a few months to the alternative: victory of the counterrevolution or dictatorship of the proletariat—Kaledin or Lenin. Such was the objective situation, just as it quickly presents itself in every revolution after the first intoxication is over, and as it presented itself in Russia as a result of the concrete, burning questions of peace and land, for which there was no solution within the framework of bourgeois revolution."

Not much room here, not so much as a crevice, for Erber's "alternative," is there? Not much room here for his "capitalist economic relations." This is a ***revolutionist*** writing—not an idol-worshipper of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, but still a ***revolutionist***, a tireless, defiant, unflinching champion of the proletariat in the class struggle. '

> "In this, the Russian Revolution has but confirmed the basic lesson of every great revolution, the law of its being, which decrees: either the revolution must advance at a rapid, stormy and resolute tempo, break down all barriers with an iron hand and place its goals ever farther ahead, or it is quite soon thrown backward behind its feeble point of departure and suppressed by counterrevolution. To stand still, to mark time on one spot, to be contented with the first goal it happens to reach, is never possihle in revolution. And he who tries to apply the home-made wisdom derived from parliamentary battles between frogs and mice to the field of revolutionary tactics only shows thereby that the very psychology and laws of existence of revolution are alien to him and that all historical experience is to him a hook sealed with seven seals."

Read it over again, especially that wonderfully priceless last sentence. And then tell us if it is not directed straight at Erber, word for word and line for line! It is much too ***exactly*** fitting to he quoted only once! "And he who tries to apply the home-made wisdom derived from parliamentary battles between frogs and mice to the field of revolutionary tactics only shows thereby that the very psychology and laws of existence of revolution are alien to him and that all historical experience is to him a book sealed with seven seals." If ever Erber gets up enough of what he lacks to look into a mirror, there is a ready-made one for him. If anyone thinks he can improve on this stinging answer to Erber and his home-made wisdom, to his Grand Coalitions between frogs and mice,

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Willy Römer

Berlin, January 1919: Demonstration in solidarity with Russian Revolution and against Social Democratic government shortly before bloody suppression of Spartakist uprising. First issue of *Die Rote Fahne* (9 November 1918), newspaper of the Spartacus League and later the Communist Party.

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No. 951 **29 January 2010**

France: Polanski Case Ignites Anti-Gay, Anti-Sex Backlash

Last fall, reviving its 32-year-old vendetta against Roman Polanski, the famous director of *Chinatown* and *The Pianist*, the Los Angeles County district attorney's office, backed by the Feds and working with Swiss authorities, orchestrated his arrest in Zurich. After being jailed for two months, the 76-year-old Polanski was released to house arrest on $4.5 million bail. He remains in Switzerland, facing possible extradition to the U.S. to be sentenced for having had consensual sex with Samantha Geimer (then

LE BOLCHEVIK

Gailey), a precocious, sexually experienced 13-year-old in 1977. On January 22, a Los Angeles judge denied Polanski's request to be sentenced in absentia, even going against the wishes of Geimer, who has repeatedly requested that the prosecution drop its charges against Polanski.

In 1977, Polanski pled guilty to "unlawful sexual intercourse" with a minor, as a Hollywood show trial with felony charges was hanging over his head. Threatened with more prison time after having already served six weeks in state prison for "diagnostic testing," Polanski, a Holocaust survivor, fled to Paris in 1978 to escape the puritanical witchhunt. This December, Polanski issued an open letter thanking his supporters for their "messages of support and sympathy," adding: "I would like every one of them to know how heartening it is, when one is locked up in a cell, to hear this murmur of human voices and of solidarity."

We have defended Roman Polanski from the onset of the vicious prosecution against him. Tiger Woods has temporarily replaced Polanski as the subject of merciless media pillorying for his affairs, which should be nobody's business but that of those involved. That so much human sexual activity runs afoul of bourgeois laws and "morals" is further proof that the wretched laws that attempt to control human sexuality—laws that cause so much misery—should be abolished.

The U.S. by no means has a monopoly on such reactionary witchhunting. We reprint below excerpts from an article by the Ligue Trotskyste de France, section of the International Communist League, that appeared in *Le Bolchévik* (December 2009) along with a translation of *Workers Vanguard*'s 1978 article, "Stop the Puritan Witchhunt Against Roman Polanski!" (*WV* No. 192, 10 February 1978) and the introduction we wrote when we reprinted that article in *WV*, "Stop Vendetta Against Roman Polanski! Free Him Now! No Extradition!" (*WV* No. 944, 9 October 2009). The LTF article deals heavily with the anti-gay witchhunt against Minister of Culture Frédéric Mitterrand, the nephew of the late Socialist Party (PS) leader François Mitterrand, France's president from 1981 to 1995.

* * *

Roman Polanski committed no crime! We demand a halt to the legal vendetta against him!

Here in France, the Roman Polanski affair has whipped up an anti-gay and anti-sex reactionary campaign led by an unholy alliance of fascists, feminists, religious fundamentalists and "Republican" social democrats. Their main target was Minister of Culture Frédéric Mitterrand, who is homosexual and who in the immediate aftermath of Polanski's arrest had taken up his defense. He characterized Polanski's detention as "absolutely dreadful" for "an old case which doesn't make much sense."

Marine Le Pen of the fascist National Front denounced Mitterrand's "revolting support" to Polanski and exhumed Mitterrand's fictionalized autobiography, *La mauvaise vie* [*The Bad Life*], which was welcomed by critics at the time of its publication in 2005. After reading on television excerpts from the book that spoke of Mitterrand visiting male prostitutes in Thailand, Le Pen demanded that the culture minister resign. After the fascists opened fire, the moral police of the Socialist Party then took up the charge. Their official spokesman, Benoît Hamon, described Mitterrand's book as a "shocking text," denouncing the politician as a "consumer minister" and also demanding his resignation. Other PS leaders joined in the feeding frenzy, including after Mitterrand was forced to make a public statement where he acknowledged having paid for sex with men his age. [PS politician] Arnaud Montebourg railed against Mitterrand: "His public and late condemnation of sexual tourism is in contradiction with his writings, which contain no condemnation of this type. If he wasn't minister, would he have the right to so much consideration and understanding?" Another PS politician, Jean-Paul Huchon, declared that Mitterrand's acts were "honestly reprehensible," adding that it seemed to him "difficult to maintain a person in the government who has been so blatantly guilty of acts that are deemed illegal by the government."

We have defended Mitterrand against this modern-day witchhunt in which reactionaries of all stripes seek once again to set up an amalgam between homosexual or pedophile on the one hand and child-murderer and rapist on the other. Mitterrand's book has no suggestion that he is a pedophile, i.e., that he is sexually attracted to children. But if he were sexually attracted to young boys, this would be no crime in our eyes. *The only guideline that ought to exist in sexual relations* is the rule of *effective consent*—that is, as long as both parties are at the time consenting to the act, nobody, least of all the state, has any right to tell them what they can and can't do. What matters is whether someone is forcing them to do anything they don't want to do with their own bodies.

"Effective consent" applies no less to prostitution. Just as the anti-sex warriors have conflated crimes of horrific violence against children with homosexuality and pedophilia, they have also set up an equation between real crimes against prostitutes, such as debt bondage, sexual assault, forced prostitution and rape, and the consensual act between a prostitute and client, exchanging money for sex.

In an editorial published in *L'Humanité* [newspaper of the French Communist Party (PCF)] under the title "Let's Get Back to the Substance of 'The Polanski Affair'" (15 October 2009), leading women members of the PCF, including Marie-George Buffet, as well as Left Party leader Martine Billard and petty-bourgeois feminist luminaries such as Maya Surduts signed a common statement accusing those defending Polanski and Mitterrand of "a criminal trivialization" of violence against women, adding, "One cannot speak of sexual freedom without condemning rape and prostitution." Such statements are intended to invite more state legislation, which would necessarily be repressive against prostitutes and their clients. We stand for the decriminalization of prostitution, which we regard as a "crime without a victim," like drug use, gambling, pornography, homosexual sex and "statutory rape"—activities that are generally illegal or heavily regulated under capitalist law.

AP

Roman Polanski

Philippe Leroyer

Paris, March 2008: Demonstration of sex workers against French government's 2003 anti-prostitution law.

The conditions faced by prostitutes, whether men or women, vary greatly according to time, place and class. But we recognize that more often than not, working as a prostitute is exploitative, dangerous and degrading. Criminalization of prostitution, however, generally forces the prostitute into a lumpen milieu where access to even the most meager social and health services becomes more difficult to acquire, rendering the prostitute more vulnerable to organized crime and violence by pimps. This has exactly been the outcome of [current French president Nicolas] Sarkozy's 2003 "Internal Security Law," which created a new offense of "passive solicitation" carrying a two-month prison sentence and heavy fine, all in the name of combating "trafficking in human beings." The organization "Rights and Prostitution" powerfully described the impact of the law on prostitutes' lives:

> "The criminalization of public soliciting, passive as well as active, was officially intended to combat trafficking in human beings. In practice, while the arrests of prostitutes have greatly increased, no sentencing for trafficking has taken place....
> "In actual fact we suffer more acts of violence than before, particularly from the police.... A strategy of harassment is even adopted sometimes in order to increasingly force us to go underground. In addition, some police officers insult, beat, gas and rob us, confiscating our preventive materials, our money and personal belongings. We are humiliated in the police stations, made to strip naked and suffer unjustified body searches. Some of us, transvestites or transgender, are placed in male cells at risk of physical aggression from the other inmates."
>
> —Letter to Representatives and Senators, 15 October 2007

Any intervention by the capitalist state in the name of "protecting" prostitutes will necessarily intensify misery for all

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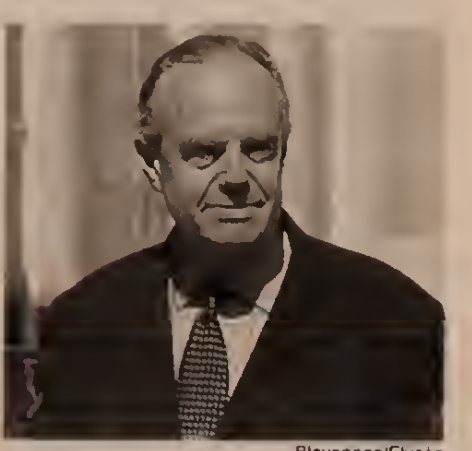

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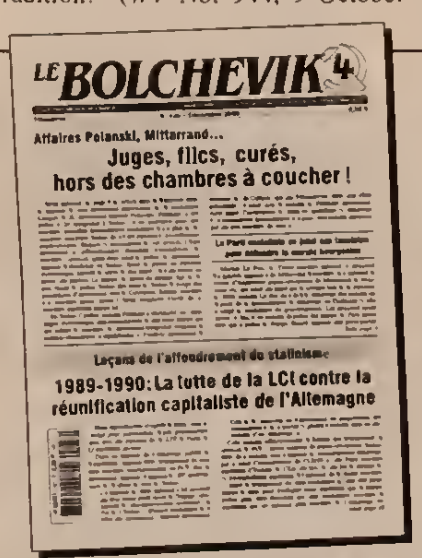
French Minister of Culture Frédéric Mitterrand.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24th Annual PDC Holiday Appeal Benefits

Supporting the Class-War Prisoners

The Partisan Defense Committee's 24th annual Holiday Appeal benefits held in December in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Toronto raised more than $10,000 after expenses. Funds raised at these events go toward providing monthly stipends and holiday gifts to class-war prisoners and their families, an expression of proletarian solidarity and material support. A class-struggle, nonsectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, the PDC carries forward the tradition begun by the International Labor Defense (ILD) under James P. Cannon. As the ILD's first conference in 1925 declared: "The labor movement must be awakened from its slumber and must be roused to the menacing significance of the attempt of the capitalists to break the morale of the working-class by imprisoning its best fighters."

Spartacist Canada

Toronto Holiday Appeal, 11 December 2009.

The case of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal was central to the Holiday Appeal benefits. PDC counsel Rachel Wolkenstein noted in her speech at the New York City benefit: "In a naked display of racist contempt the U.S. Supreme Court last April 6 turned down Mumia's petition to overturn his frame-up conviction.... It has sat for months on the Philadelphia district attorney's appeal to reinstate the death penalty." On January 19, the Supreme Court issued a decision that brings Mumia one step closer to execution (see PDC statement, page 12). As Wolkenstein underlined, "The state has made it clear for some 28 years that they want Mumia dead.... They howl for his blood because they see in Mumia the voice of defiant opposition to all forms of racist discrimination."

Addressing the New York benefit was Francisco Torres, one of the San Francisco 8, former Black Panthers prosecuted by the state on bogus charges of killing a San Francisco police officer in 1971. The state had to abandon its prosecution of most members of the SF8 (see "COINTELPRO Charges Dropped Against Four SF8 Defendants," *WV* No. 941, 28 August 2009). The conspiracy charge against Torres has been dropped but the vendetta against Torres continues, as a murder charge still hangs over his head despite the lack of any evidence. After giving a brief update on his case and thanking the PDC for its support, Torres stated, "For those of you who still think these dirty tactics and COINTELPRO programs don't exist...they still prevail and persist."

Also speaking at the New York benefit was Ralph Poynter, the longtime companion of Lynne Stewart, a 70-year-old leftist attorney who in recent years has been a regular speaker at New York Holiday Appeal benefits. But she was noticeably absent this year. Stewart was hauled off to prison on 19 November 2009 after the courts denied her appeal of her conviction on bogus charges of conspiracy to provide "material support" to terrorism. The courts have threatened to extend her sentence by 28 more years. The 2005 conviction of Stewart, along with translator Mohamed Yousry and paralegal Ahmed Abdel Sattar, stemmed from her legal defense of her client, Egyptian Islamic fundamentalist cleric Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman. Poynter spoke to the threat that Stewart's conviction poses to other defense lawyers, pointing to the upcoming show trial in New York City of Guantánamo detainees: "They picked the time to arrest Lynne Stewart to coincide with bringing the prisoners from Guantánamo, and if you don't believe that, you wait until you see some attorney stand up and say, 'Are you going to use torture as evidence?'"

WV Photo

Francisco Torres of SF8 addresses New York City Holiday Appeal, 5 December 2009.

WV Photo

Displays showing work of Partisan Defense Committee at New York benefit.

Ralph Poynter sparked some debate when he spoke sympathetically of Cynthia McKinney, the capitalist Green Party's 2008 presidential candidate who was supported by many leftists: "She began to move and if she can move, what about all those people who believe in her? Maybe we can move them a little bit." The Spartacist League speaker argued against "unity" with "trade-union bureaucrats and the fake left," who "build illusions that the capitalist state can be reformed," adding:

> "We stand in opposition to the interests of the bourgeoisie and fight for the interests of the working class. We said: 'No vote to Democrats, Republicans or Greens!' Cynthia McKinney runs for capitalist parties! Period. That's the systems she defends. We fight for the independence of the working class and oppose calls for unity with the bosses and their parties!"

At the San Francisco benefit, the speaker for the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense, which is fraternally allied with the Spartacist League, addressed the cases of Aaron Harrison and Jason Ruffin, two black members of International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 who were prosecuted on frame-up charges of "resisting arrest" after being subjected to a racist, anti-union attack by cops at the Sacramento port. After a nine-day trial ended in a hung jury in January 2009, Ruffin and Harrison's cases were separated. A second jury found Ruffin not guilty. But Harrison was found guilty and sentenced to one year's probation, a fine and 30 days of community service. As the LBL speaker emphasized:

> "The prosecution of Harrison and Ruffin demonstrates the bipartisan 'war on terror' to be a union-busting war on blacks and labor as well as immigrants. It also exposes the treacherous support by the ILWU tops for the maritime security measures that allow the government to ride roughshod over and fire dock workers. Down with the maritime security measures!"

Along with Mumia, the PDC benefits honored 15 other class-war prisoners, whose plights must not be forgotten. American Indian Movement activist Leonard Peltier has spent more than 33 years in prison for his activism on behalf of this country's oppressed native peoples. The U.S. Parole Commission again turned down his parole request last August, declaring they would not reconsider his case for another 15 years! Eight MOVE members (Chuck, Michael, Debbie, Janet, Janine, Delbert, Eddie and Phil Africa) are in their 32nd year of prison—their only "crime" was having survived a massive cop assault on their Philadelphia home in 1978.

Other PDC stipend recipients include Jaan Laaman and Thomas Manning, the last of the anti-imperialist activists known as the Ohio 7 who are still in prison. The Ohio 7 took credit for bank "expropriations" and bombings of symbols of U.S. imperialism in the late 1970s and early '80s. Former Black Panther Party supporters Ed Poindexter and Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa are victims of the FBI's deadly COINTELPRO operation against the Panthers, framed up and languishing behind bars for 37 years. Hugo Pinell, a militant anti-racist leader of prison rights organizing, is the last of the San Quentin 6 still in prison. At the NYC benefit, Monique Code read greetings from Jamal Hart, Mumia's son, who was sentenced in 1998 on bogus gun-possession charges, framed up for his prominent activism in the campaign to free his father. (For more on these class-war prisoners, see "Build PDC Holiday Appeal," *WV* No. 947, 20 November 2009.)

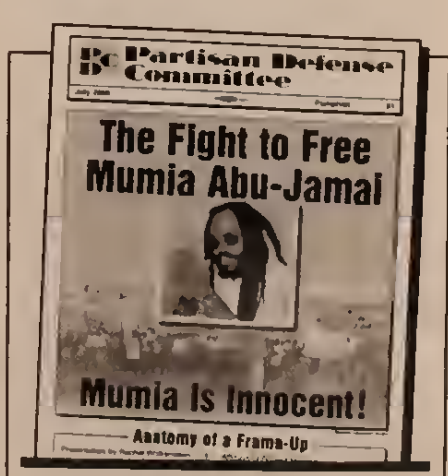
The above does not exhaust the list of those causes and cases for which the working class should mobilize. The Spartacist League speaker at the Los Angeles benefit underlined: "In addition to those mentioned in the program today, we have taken up the fight for those targeted under the puritanical, anti-sex witchhunt." The speaker pointed to "the struggle for gay rights and their right to marriage (and divorce)" and our stand "against the vindictive persecution of Roman Polanski.... Our fight for Mumia and the other class-war prisoners must be put in the context of the fight for freedom from this entire system, and for the construction of an egalitarian socialist society."

Our December 2009 Holiday Appeal benefits took place a year into Democrat Barack Obama's term as U.S. imperialist Commander-in-Chief, as working people continue to be battered by the Great Recession and death and destruction continue to rain down on the peoples of Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan.

As the speaker for the Labor Black Struggle League in Chicago underscored:

> "Obama bailed out the banks. The auto companies were given an economic windfall while auto workers have seen their lives shattered, their neighborhoods further blighted.... In Barack Obama, the capitalists now have a black overseer on the master's capitalist plantation.... Working people are under attack but they are not powerless. What's needed is a fight to break the labor movement from the Democrats. We need a workers party that fights for a workers government that smashes the system of capitalism, of exploitation and oppression."

It is under this class-struggle program that we call to *free all class-war prisoners now!* Contribute to the PDC at P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013.■



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Union Tops Complicit with Democratic NY Governor

Stealth Attack on Public Workers' Pensions

NEW YORK CITY—A significant anti-labor attack took place in early December when state lawmakers in Albany introduced and passed *in a single day* legislation that created a new "Tier 5" pension for most new state and municipal workers hired after January 1. This gutting of hard-won pension rights was orchestrated by Democratic New York State governor David Paterson, who announced that over *$35 billion* will be cut from public workers' pensions over the next three decades. These savings for the capitalist government will come from forcing most new-hires to accept higher deductions in each paycheck and to work longer before retiring. Pension eligibility will be raised from 55 to 62 years and the minimum service to draw a pension will increase from five to ten years.

This stealth attack on pensions is one sign that it is open season on labor in Obama's America. The financial meltdown of American capitalism has set off budget crises in states across the country (see "The California Budget Crisis and the Bankruptcy of American Capitalism," *WV* No. 941, 28 August 2009). In turn, state governments controlled by Democrats and Republicans alike have taken a cue from the White House, which wrested massive concessions from the United Auto Workers (UAW) as a condition for the GM and Chrysler bailouts. They are using the budget crises to push through layoffs and slash wages and benefits. This is a union-busting drive aimed at public workers, who now, for the first time, make up the majority of union members in the U.S.

Last summer, Paterson threatened mass layoffs to get union bureaucrats from the state's two largest public employee unions, the Civil Service Employees Association and the Public Employees Federation, into backroom negotiations to cook up a new pension tier. The pro-Democratic Party union tops sold out in a heartbeat, even agreeing to 7,000 job cuts through "aggressive attrition" instead of layoffs. The new "Tier 5" pension does not apply to most New York City public workers, although a version does apply to newly hired teachers. "Tier 5" also doesn't apply to transit workers employed by the state's Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), although it is only a matter of time before billionaire Republican mayor Mike Bloomberg and the MTA attempt to force "parity" on transit and all city workers.

Notably, the MTA's demand for a new "Tier 5" pension from Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 was the main provocation that sparked the 60-hour NYC transit strike in December 2005. Then-TWU Local 100 president Roger Toussaint declared beforehand that the union would not sell out "the unborn" (future hires). But with transit workers on the picket lines fighting against tiered pensions, a threat facing *all* city and state public workers, city labor leaders refused to support the strike. This was an expression of their de facto support to the slave-labor Taylor Law, which outlaws New York State public employee strikes. United labor action to smash the Taylor Law would have been key to winning the widely popular transit strike. In the end, the strike staved off a "Tier 5" pension, but Toussaint & Co. did grant the MTA a huge medical care concession while scuttling the strike without a contract in hand.

The sellout TWU bureaucracy went on to support the gubernatorial campaign of Democrat Eliot Spitzer, who as state attorney general hit Local 100 and its members with massive Taylor Law fines and even put Toussaint briefly in jail. With Spitzer's demise, the union tops enthusiastically embraced Paterson (whose father, longtime Democratic Party operator Basil Paterson, was a paid advisor to Local 100 before and during the strike). But Paterson has only proven yet again that reliance on the capitalist Democratic Party is a losing game. In fact, Paterson has delivered a blow to union pension gains that former Republican governor George Pataki and the MTA could only dream about.

TWU Local 100

New York City transit workers struck for nearly three days in defiance of state's slave-labor Taylor Law, December 2005.

For the union bureaucrat, resigned to forking over concessions to the bosses, it does not take much to accept new tiers: existing workers are supposedly "not affected" while yet-to-be-hired workers cannot vote. But what follows is corrosive to the union. New workers are soon toiling at the same jobs for less, fueling dissension within a layer of second-class union members, who are less likely to defend either the union or more senior workers. Once the new tier is in place, the bosses inevitably come back to knife the older and retired workers with their so-called "Cadillac" pay and benefits. The 2007 contract brokered by the UAW tops allowed new-hires and temporary workers to make *half as much pay* for doing the same work as existing UAW members. Soon after the Big Three, helped by the bailout deal, greatly accelerated plant closings and layoffs to drive senior workers out of the workforce. Labor must demand: *Equal pay for equal work!*

American workers' dream of a "comfortable retirement" is a sick joke these days. Bourgeois ideologues, think tanks and media mouthpieces rail against government employees who still have "defined-benefit" pensions, which have been shredded in the private sector. The notion that companies "owe" workers a few dollars to live on when they retire is considered antiquated. Defined-benefit pensions have largely been replaced by 401(k)s, mostly paid for by the workers themselves, with actual benefits dependent on the vagaries of Wall Street parasites. In 1983, 62 percent of American workers had a defined-benefit pension plan, but only 17 percent had them in 2007. Large corporations often loot their pension funds, and bankrupt ones simply unload their liabilities onto the Fed's Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, which then doles out pennies on the dollar.

With workers made to "sacrifice" to prop up the flagging capitalist economy and bloody U.S. imperialism, the response of the trade-union bureaucracy has been to maneuver for crumbs while peddling a false unity of interests with the bosses. New York's public workers unions represent transit, sanitation, hospital and highway workers with enormous potential power. But that power is consciously squandered by the union misleaders whose allegiance to American capitalism and the Democratic Party has tied labor's hands for decades. The all-sided attacks on workers today pose pointblank the importance of having a class-struggle leadership. The fight for a new leadership of the unions is part and parcel of forging a workers party to fight for a workers government and the expropriation of the capitalist class.■

Mumia...

(continued from page 12)

capitalist rulers. When Mumia faced a death warrant in the summer of 1995, worldwide protests that included trade unions representing hundreds of thousands of workers played a crucial role in staying the executioner's hand.

Counterposed to this class-struggle strategy is the policy of many organizations —Socialist Action, the Workers World Party, the Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal and others—which long centered their protests on the demand for a new, fair trial for Mumia. With the judicial appeals in which they put their faith nearly exhausted, their plea that the capitalist state deliver justice now comes in the form of petitions to Attorney General Eric Holder to conduct a civil rights investigation into Mumia's frame-up trial and to President Barack Obama to "speak out against the death penalty for Mumia Abu-Jamal."

These hat-in-hand appeals to America's top cop and imperialist Commander-in-Chief are a savage indictment of the liberal belief in the "democracy" of capitalist class rule. Holder's Justice Department recently threw leftist attorney Lynne Stewart in prison and threatened to extend her sentence by 28 more years for staunchly defending her client, who was accused of terrorist activities. Obama openly announced his support for the death penalty in his run for the White House, including in an interview with right-wing journalist Michael Smerconish, one of the voices calling loudest for Mumia's execution.

AP

November 1998 conference at Chicago's Northwestern University School of Law featured 30 people who had been released from death row after proving their innocence.

After eight years of the despised Bush regime, Obama took office to give a facelift to blood-soaked U.S. imperialism. Reinforcing illusions that Obama represents "change," the reformist left tails after the trade-union bureaucracy, whose program of seeking "friends" in the parties and state agencies of the capitalist class enemy has gravely dissipated labor's fighting capacity. Meanwhile, the U.S. military still rains death on Iraq and Afghanistan, inmates from America's vast prison complex to the military's Bagram and Guantánamo Bay dungeons continue to be brutalized and tortured, and bankers get billion-dollar bailouts while workers lose their jobs and homes.

The fight to free Mumia, as with all struggles against social oppression and deprivation, can go forward based only on a clear understanding of the class forces involved. Make no mistake: In baying for Mumia's blood, the forces of bourgeois "law and order" are sending a message to all who would fight against exploitation, oppression and imperialist war that they, too, are in the sights of the state. Any real fight for Mumia's freedom must be based on a class-struggle opposition to the capitalist rulers, who have entombed this innocent man for more than half his life. *Free Mumia now!*■

Asylum for Tamil Refugees Now!

Australia

Roy Rubianto

Desperate Tamil asylum seekers on Australian Customs vessel *Oceanic Viking* in November 2009.

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

The following article, which incorporates a small factual correction, is reprinted from Australasian Spartacist *No. 207 (Summer 2009/10), newspaper of the Spartacist League of Australia, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).*

For months the bourgeoisie, politicians and media have waged an hysterical campaign against desperate refugees seeking asylum by boat. Demonised as "illegal," many are Tamils fleeing the imperialist-backed Sri Lankan regime's merciless repression. Since the regime's military offensive ended in May, some 300,000 Tamils have been interned in horrific prison camps and interrogation centres. Underscoring the risks these refugees face, in early November twelve Tamils drowned when their boat sank almost 650 kilometres from the Cocos Islands. Months earlier, five refugees died and scores were injured when their boat exploded after it was seized by the Australian navy.

Refugees intercepted on the high seas by heavily armed Australian navy ships are turned back or redirected to Indonesia. Those captured in "Australian waters" are incarcerated behind razor wire in the remote Christmas Island detention centre, an overcrowded hellhole likened to Guantánamo Bay. Rudd's federal ALP [Australian Labor Party] government enforces mandatory detention of "illegal" refugees, first imposed by the Keating ALP government in 1992. Once "processed," for those refugees deported, it can be a death sentence. We demand: *Close the detention comps! No deportotions! For the right of osylum for Tamil refugees ond oll victims of right-wing terror! Full citizenship rights for oll who hove made it here!*

Capitalist governments from Europe to North America to Australia have been waging a vicious war on the millions of refugees forced to flee the immiseration caused by imperialism. This brutality occurs in the context of the biggest capitalist economic crisis since the Great Depression. Millions of workers have lost their jobs across the globe. As the ongoing crisis continues to threaten the livelihoods of working people, the Rudd Labor government targets immigrants and minorities with increased state repression and violence. This in turn has generated racist attacks on the streets such as the wave of murderous terror against Indian and Chinese students.

Anti-immigrant racism is a time-worn method of the capitalist rulers to divide the working class and paralyse it in the face of the capitalists' attacks. It can and must be fought by the organised workers movement. Giving a taste of the power the working class can wield, in 1998 union action in Perth saved a Somali man from being deported to certain death when the pilots refused to fly the plane and ground crew refused to refuel it. Mobilising the workers movement in defence of immigrant rights is crucial to the defence of the multiracial working class as a whole, to forging the necessary unity and strength to fight the bosses' war on working people. Far from helpless victims, immigrants are a vital component of the working class, the force capable of destroying this decaying capitalist system. Only by sweeping away capitalist rule through workers revolution and building a classless socialist society can there be an end to racism.

ALP's Anti-Refugee, "Anti-Terror" Regional "Security"

In mid-October, at Rudd's behest, the Indonesian navy intercepted a boat carrying 260 Tamil asylum seekers. Taken to a port in Java, the refugees refused to leave their boat fearing they would be detained there in limbo for years. The Rudd government then brokered a deal with Indonesia for the latter to take 78 Tamil asylum seekers picked up by the Australian Customs ship, the *Oceanic Viking*. This turned into a month-long stand-off after the refugees refused to disembark until given a written guarantee of quick resettlement in Australia.

The Rudd government has increased funding to Indonesia to help police Australia's racist "border protection" measures, including incarcerating refugees in Australian-funded detention centres there. For the Australian imperialists, strengthening ties with Indonesia is of key economic and geo-strategic importance. The Rudd government has been working to strengthen military co-operation with Indonesia, and continues training the blood-soaked Kopassus special forces, whose role is to suppress any opposition to the repressive Indonesian regime.

As a jackal imperialist power allied to the U.S., Australia seeks to impose regional "stability," i.e., ensure its flow of profits from imperialist exploitation, by shoring up semicolonial regimes that will do their bidding. Australian imperialism's recent spate of military and other agreements with regimes from the Philippines to Indonesia also occurs in the context of increased imperialist concern over the growing political and economic influence of the Chinese deformed workers state in the Asia-Pacific region. We stand for the unconditional military defence of China against imperialist attack and internal capitalist counterrevolution and for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The Rudd government is also providing resources and training for the Sinhala-chauvinist Sri Lankan government including to beef up the regime's crackdown on Tamils attempting to flee the island. The Sri Lankan government's bloody 26-year war against the Tamils in the North and East of the island ended in May with the destruction of the remnants of the Tamil mini-state and the execution of the leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). We stand for the right of self-determination for the Tamil people and stood for the military defence of the LTTE against the army assault. At the same time we give no political support to the bourgeois-nationalist LTTE who, carrying out the logic of nationalism, have staged attacks on Sinhalese villagers, expelled Muslims from the historic Tamil city of Jaffna and employed murderous violence against other Tamil nationalist groups.

The banning of the LTTE as a "terrorist" organisation by governments in numerous countries effectively gave the Lankan regime a green light to carry out its murderous offensive. We in the International Communist League denounced these bans and called for the defence of Tamil organisations against state repression, just as we have defended individual Tamils arrested and charged under the "anti-terror" legislation.

Using the criminal attack on the World Trade Center in 2001 and subsequent attacks such as the Bali and London bombings as a pretext, capitalist rulers around the world have used the "war on terror" to whip up racism, jack up state repression at home and regiment the population, criminalising political dissent and restricting the civil liberties of all. The "anti-terror" frenzy is also used to justify imperialist marauding abroad, including the growing and bloody occupation of Afghanistan, where under the banner of the "war on terror" thousands of civilians have been maimed and slaughtered.

While particularly targeting Arab, Asian and Muslim people, the "anti-terror" laws are ultimately aimed against the entire working class. Today, the Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU) is targeted by the witch-hunting Australian Building Construction Commission (ABCC) of the Rudd government. The ABCC's ASIO [Australia Security Intelligence Office]-style powers to spy on, secretly interrogate and prosecute militant workers are patterned on the "anti-terror" laws. CFMEUer Ark Tribe faces a jail sentence of up to six months for allegedly failing to attend a compulsory ABCC interrogation. We say: Defend the unions! Down with government union busting including the ABCC! It is necessary to organise a proletarian-centred fight against all the reactionary "anti-terror" and anti-union laws.

White Australia Racism and Laborism

One of the very few notes of public dissent by ALP politicians against Rudd's racist war on refugees came from retiring federal backbencher Julia Irwin, who aptly labelled Rudd's "Indonesian solution" worse than the previous Howard government's "Pacific solution." Australian capitalism's immigration laws are designed to ensure that only those who have the desired skills, money or anti-communist credentials—and preferably the "right" skin colour—are allowed in. Thus, while demonising Tamil and other refugees, Rudd simultaneously peddles the view of a wing of the capitalist rulers who worry that Australia's current population base is insufficient to compete economically against their rivals.

Australia was established as a white imperialist enclave in Asia—a British penal colony built on the bloody dispossession and mass murder of the Aboriginal people, pogroms against the Chinese people and a racist colour bar to keep out anyone not "Anglo-Celtic" enough. "White Australia" racism was a founding pillar of the ALP. The exclusion of "cheap" Asian labour was the basis of the Labor Party's chimera of bringing prosperity to its white Australian working-class base through domestic capitalist ownership and the exploitation of Australia's natural resources. While the White Australia policy has been formally abolished and Australia is no longer lily-

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white, Australia is nevertheless a virulently racist minor imperialist power. And the ALP, wedded to the rule of capital, continues to identify with the xenophobic fears of its own ruling class.

The ALP is a bourgeois workers party —thoroughly bourgeois in its program, outlook and leadership while based on the trade unions. Through the instrument of the Laborite trade-union bureaucracy, the "labour lieutenants of capital," the bourgeoisie's "values" are transmitted to the working class. Pushing nationalism and "protection" of Australian industry, the trade-union bureaucracy instils in the proletariat the lie that workers and their capitalist bosses have fundamental interests in common. Earlier this year, the leader of the right-wing Australian Workers' Union, Paul Howes, railed against taxpayers' money "supporting the jobs of Indian steelmakers or Chinese steelmakers or Brazilian aluminium-makers" (*Australian*, 3 February 2009). Such wretched class collaboration is intended to blind the proletariat to the irreconcilable conflict between labour and capital, poisoning international working-class solidarity. Against such nationalist trash we counterpose the clarion call of the *Communist Manifesto*: "Workers of the World, Unite!"

Howes, a darling of the Murdoch press, received much media coverage recently when he criticised the government's policy on refugees. Stating that "This is an issue about leadership," the staunchly Labor-loyal and deeply anti-communist Howes declared, "Malcolm Fraser turned public opinion around to accepting the Vietnamese boat people. Arthur Calwell, the immigration minister in the Chifley government, taught the people about what immigration means for Australia, about the benefits" (*Age*, 7 November 2009). Lining up to applaud Howes' stance on refugees were a gamut of trade-union bureaucrats and their "left" tails. Tim Gooden, Geelong Trades Hall Council secretary and pin-up boy of the Democratic Socialist Perspective's Socialist Alliance (SA), added his own whitewash of the Chifley Labor government, declaring it "helped build this country by welcoming people fleeing war and persecution" (*Green Left Weekly*, 28 October 2009).

Immigration policies under capitalism serve not only the economic but also the political interests of the bourgeoisie. With the xenophobic White Australia capitalist rulers desperate for more workers after World War II, the slogan of the post-war Chifley Labor government was "Populate or Perish." Directed against the Japanese in particular and the Asian masses in general, it meant populate Australia with white immigrants. Thus innumerable fascist war criminals were welcomed, while their victims—Jews and communists—were not, as immigration officials were instructed to comb the displaced persons camps looking for "Aryans." When not enough "Anglo-Celtics" could be persuaded to migrate, others from Eastern and, later, Southern Europe were declared to be "white enough" to qualify.

Deeply committed to "White Australia," the Chifley government at the same time was determined to deport all Asians who had ended up in Australia during the war—some of whom had married Australian citizens. However an exception was made following the 1949 Chinese Revolution. In the name of anti-Communism, there would be no deportations to "Red China."

While SA's Tim Gooden praises Chifley's racist "immigration" program, the virulent anti-communists of Socialist Alternative (SAlt) paint a rosy picture of the Fraser government's "acceptance" of thousands of Vietnamese in the late 1970s (*Socialist Alternative*, December 2009). Under intense pressure from the U.S., Fraser's acceptance was premised on saving members and supporters of the imperialists' brutal puppet regime in South Vietnam following the defeat of U.S. and Australian forces by the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants. While the Vietnamese arrivals were nevertheless subjected to vile White Australia racism, many were also used by the state to physically suppress expressions of solidarity here with the Vietnamese Revolution. In 1985, rightist Vietnamese mobs were unleashed by the Hawke Labor government against meetings celebrating the 10th anniversary of the revolution.

For their part, the reformists of Solidarity, particularly through their Refugee Action Coalition (RAC), have for years used the refugee issue to push anti-communism and loyalty to capitalist "democracy." In 2007, Solidarity turned a refugee rights rally into a platform for the bourgeois Greens and the counterrevolutionary Falun Gong and "Free China" crowd to vituperate against the Chinese deformed workers state.

Protectionist Poison and "Border Security"

While the CFMEU and Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) tops have also expressed some concern for refugees, this is thin gruel compared with their ongoing role in whipping up anti-immigrant chauvinism and directly helping to enforce fortress White Australia on behalf of the capitalist rulers and their government. The CFMEU, with its large multiracial membership, has episodically taken up the defence of deeply exploited "guest workers." However, alongside this, CFMEU leaders such as Andrew Ferguson rail against "illegal" construction workers "taking away the jobs of Australian workers" (*Australian*, 16 October 2009). Despicably, the CFMEU tops have also boasted of reporting "illegal" workers to the cops for arrest and deportation ("Liberals Go Soft on Illegals," *Unity*, December 2000).

The MUA misleaders have also long pushed nationalist protectionism, for example demanding "Australian crews for Australian ships." In late October, in the midst of the desperate effort by the 78 Tamil asylum seekers aboard the *Oceanic Viking* to win asylum in Australia, the MUA tops issued a statement that gave *support* to the government's anti-refugee "border protection" frenzy. Referring to the 13 MUA seafarers on board the armed government Customs vessel, the union bureaucracy crowed, "The central role played by Australian seafarers is crucial in complementing defence and border security arrangements" (30 October 2009 MUA media statement).

Notwithstanding the fact that the MUA and CFMEU tops subsequently announced a union donation of $10,000 to the refugees on board the *Oceanic Viking*, the role of these pro-capitalist misleaders of the unions is to push the class-collaborationist lie that workers have an interest in defending the borders of Australian capitalism. A class-struggle leadership in the unions, in fighting to forge international proletarian unity, would stand intransigently opposed to such pro-capitalist nationalist bile.

Customs, along with the military, police, courts, prisons and detention camps, are part of the armed fist of the capitalist state whose purpose is to protect capitalist rule and the private ownership of the means of production. The navy is the frontline in Rudd's "border control" against refugees, while the police and military enforce the government's takeover of Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory and are used against workers' pickets. In 1989, the Hawke Labor government used air force pilots in a strike-breaking operation to smash the pilots' union and in 1949 the Chifley Labor government called in the troops to smash the coalminers' strike. The capitalist state apparatus cannot be wielded in the interests of the working class and oppressed. It must be smashed through working-class revolution.

A Revolutionary Perspective vs. Laborite Reformism

In response to a reactionary backlash over the announced union donation to the Tamil refugees on the *Oceanic Viking*, SA and SAlt cadre rushed to laud the MUA/CFMEU tops without a word of criticism of these bureaucrats' willing service to "defending Australia's borders." In this they illustrate their role in the Laborite chain that binds workers to the capitalist system. The reformists serve as a cover for the "left" union bureaucrats who in turn cover for the ALP, whose role in government is to administer Australian imperialism on behalf of the capitalist rulers.

SA, SAlt and the Socialist Party (SP) have joined a dozen organisations from Malaysia to New Zealand in signing a 5 November 2009 statement protesting the treatment of Tamil refugees. It appeals to the capitalist regimes in the region and demands that racist Australian imperialism "take a leading role in helping reduce the misery of the world's millions of refugees." With this demand, SA, SP and SAlt push deadly illusions in the imperialists (especially "their own"), whose depredations around the globe are *responsible* for the horrific plight of refugees.

These reformists call for refugees to be allowed to "live in freedom in Australia while their claims are processed," i.e., until this racist government decides to deport them or not. SA, SAlt and SP all endorsed a December 5 Melbourne rally organised by RAC and others, "Let the refugees into Australia." The rally demands deep-six even the usual reformist opposition to mandatory detention in order not to offend the Labor Party, who they helped put in power at the last elections. In contrast to these groups, we Marxists do not seek to advise capitalist governments on more "progressive" immigration policies. All laws in defence of the nationally based bourgeoisie's rule are necessarily racist and chauvinist.

Of a piece with building illusions in White Australia capitalism, SA, SAlt and SP also promote the "humanitarian" credentials of the United Nations, an imperialist den of thieves, their victims and intended victims. Sowing illusions in Australian imperialism and the United Nations is not new for these "little Australia" reformists. In 1999 they marched in lock-step with the ALP and trade-union bureaucrats in demonstrations that screamed for Australian imperialist troops to go to East Timor. The Australian-led UN occupation there has meant racist state terror and brutal imperialist exploitation. We say: Australian troops out of Afghanistan, East Timor, and the Solomons! For a class-struggle fight for refugee and immigrant rights!

In its attempts to maximise profits, the capitalist class shifts production to low-wage neocolonies while seeking out the cheapest sources of labour at home: foreign-born workers, women and youth. New layers of immigrants bring into the multiracial working class valuable experiences from struggles abroad. A class-struggle fight in defence of refugees and for immigrant rights would help build a bridge to the struggles of workers from Indonesia to the Philippines who are heavily exploited by Australian imperialism. We stand on the all too rare examples of international working-class solidarity, such as waterfront workers' actions in solidarity with Indonesia's struggle for independence in the late 1940s and with the fight of the Vietnamese workers and peasants against U.S./Australian imperialism in the 1960s and '70s.

If the trade unions are to become weapons of struggle in the interests of the working class and oppressed, a leadership must be built in political opposition to the fetid Laborite nationalism and obeisance to the capitalist state pushed by the current trade-union misleaders and their "left" tails. Fighting for the unity and integrity of the working class against chauvinism and racism, such a leadership, linked to a revolutionary party, would fight to organise the unorganised. It would fight to bring undocumented workers and exploited women outworkers [home-based garment workers] into the unions with full union rights and conditions, as part of a class-struggle fight for jobs for all. It would mobilise the multiracial working class in struggle against all the government's racist immigration laws, demanding full citizenship rights for all, asylum rights for all those fleeing right-wing repression and a halt to racist deportations.

The indispensable instrument to transform the political consciousness of the working class from a class in itself to a class *for* itself, conscious of its historic role in sweeping away the whole rotting capitalist system, is a Leninist vanguard party. Such a party will champion the cause of oppressed minorities, immigrants and Aborigines, exposing all the capitalist tyranny and injustice, winning the advanced layers of the proletariat to its banner in the struggle for socialist revolution. *For a workers republic of Australia, as part of a socialist Asia!* ■

Indian students protest wave of racist attacks, Melbourne, May 2009. Inset: Indian student Sravan Kumar Theerthala in hospital after vicious stabbing.

Indian Link

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Haiti...

(continued from page 1)

blockade to prevent a seaborne exodus of refugees seeking sanctuary in the U.S. An American Air Force plane flies daily over Haiti broadcasting a Creole-language appeal from that country's ambassador to Washington calling on Haitians not to attempt to flee the country by boat.

The Obama administration announced that undocumented Haitians in the U.S. would be granted "temporary protected status" allowing them to remain and work in this country—if they can even find jobs in this economy with rampant unemployment and dispossession. However, many injured Haitians were denied the visas that would allow them to be transferred to Miami for surgery and treatment—immigration officials in Florida even seized a two-year-old Haitian child who required medical treatment. At the U.S. military camp in Guantánamo, Cuba, almost 200 prisoners of the "war on terror" remain locked up in inhuman conditions. Obama's deadline for shutting down the prison passed unnoticed last week. Military authorities there are rushing to set up an installation capable of holding up to 13,000 Haitian refugees.

In preparing to interdict any Haitian refugees seeking to reach the U.S., Obama is following in the footsteps of George W. Bush and previous presidents going back to a 1981 treaty signed by President Ronald Reagan and the then-puppet dictator "Baby Doc" Duvalier. In September 1991, a military coup toppled the presidency of populist priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide after less than one year, sending many of his supporters to sea in rickety boats. The administration of the first Bush plucked thousands of Haitian refugees from their boats and imprisoned them indefinitely at Guantánamo with no right to legal counsel—a policy continued under Democrat Bill Clinton. We demand: Down with the racist ban on Haitian refugees! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! U.S. out of Guantánamo!

Down With U.S. Imperialism!

For liberals disappointed with the Obama administration's policies in Afghanistan and Iraq, the earthquake in Haiti was seen as an opportunity for the U.S. to show a benign face. This was echoed by Obama's somewhat disillusioned reformist boosters, such as the ISO and WWP. The ISO demands that "Obama immediately stop the military occupation of Haiti," while calling for the U.S. to "flood the country with doctors, nurses, food, water and construction machinery" (*Socialist Worker* online, 19 January). Likewise, a January 14 statement on Workers World's Web site demands "the removal of all U.N. combat troops," while calling for "all bonuses from executives of financial institutions that received bailout money to be donated to Haiti."

The notion that U.S. imperialism can be pressured into serving the needs of the oppressed, rather than its own class interests, shows boundless illusions in the good offices of the rapacious American ruling class. Reformists like the ISO and WWP perennially raised calls at demonstrations against the U.S. war in Iraq demanding a shift of U.S. government spending priorities from war to social services like education. But neocolonial domination and aggrandizement are inherent to imperialism, and no amount of pressure and pleading can change that.

Rainey/Newark Star-Ledger

Cuban volunteer medical team treats earthquake victims in Port-au-Prince, January 16.

The brutal treatment routinely meted out to Haitians seeking asylum in the U.S.—detention, humiliation, deportation—contrasts sharply with the way the U.S. welcomes counterrevolutionary *gusanos* (worms), whom they encourage to "flee" from Cuba. A social revolution in Cuba overthrew capitalism in what had been an impoverished neocolony, and ever since then the U.S. ruling class has been determined to overturn the Cuban Revolution and re-establish capitalist exploitation in that country. We stand for the unconditional military defense of the Cuban bureaucratically deformed workers state against imperialism and the forces of internal counterrevolution. At the same time, we fight for workers political revolution to oust the ruling Stalinist bureaucracy and replace it with a regime based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

Cuba has provided medical personnel and medical training to countries throughout Latin America and elsewhere, and Cuban universities have trained over 500 Haitian doctors, free of charge. Before the earthquake hit, some 350 Cuban medical personnel were already working in Haiti. Within hours of the quake, Cuba dispatched an additional 69 doctors from the Henry Reeve International Contingent of Doctors Specialized in Disaster Situations and Serious Epidemics. That brigade, named after a U.S. citizen who fought for Cuban independence from Spain in the late 19th century, was set up by the Cuban government in September 2005 to aid victims of Katrina (the Cuban doctors were refused entry into the U.S.).

Even the conservative *Wall Street Journal* (17 January) conceded: "U.S. officials have blamed security concerns for holding up providing relief. Yet a team of Cuban doctors were seen Monday treating hundreds of patients without a gun or soldier in sight." Moreover, despite repeated attempts by U.S. imperialism to foment counterrevolution—including a decades-long U.S. starvation embargo—Cuba has temporarily allowed U.S. military aircraft to fly over its airspace in order to speed up aid efforts for Haiti.

The advantages of a collectivized economy over capitalist anarchy are evident not least in the way Cuba deals with natural disasters. Cuba, which is regularly battered by hurricanes, is well known for its efficient evacuation of citizens in the face of such disasters. When the Haiti quake struck, southeastern Cuba was put on tsunami watch for 90 minutes. During that brief period, Cuban authorities evacuated some 30,000 people from Baracoa, that part of the island closest to Haiti; they were able to return home that evening.

Reuters

Fifteen-year-old girl shot dead by a Haitian cop for "looting," January 19.

Winter/NY Times

Haitians in desperate need of water near Toussaint L'Ouverture Airport, January 15.

A History of Neocolonial Rape and Dispossession

For 200 years, the Haitian masses have been paying in blood for the revolution they carried out under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture against the French colonial slavocracy. Directly inspired by the Great French Revolution, the Haitian Revolution of 1791-1804, which culminated in the creation of the first independent black state in the modern era, served as a beacon, inspiring slave revolts throughout the Americas. It was greeted with a frenzy of racist counterrevolutionary hostility from both Napoleonic France and the slave-owning United States.

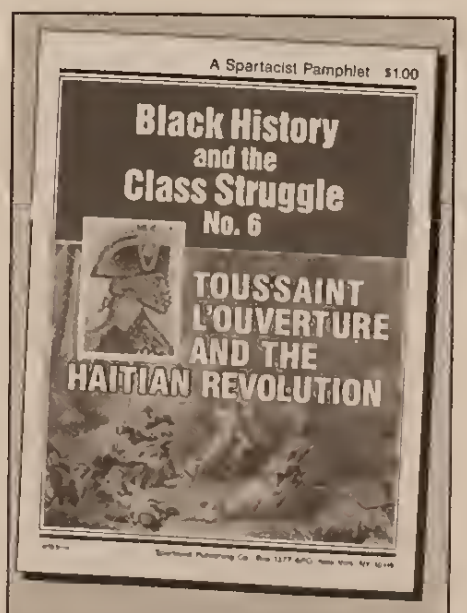
In return for recognition by France, Haiti was compelled to compensate the former slaveowners to the tune of 150 million gold francs—approximately $20 billion at today's prices. For its part, the U.S. refused to grant Haiti diplomatic recognition until 1862, during the Civil War against the Southern slavocracy. Throughout the 1800s, the U.S. and European powers used gunboat diplomacy and the threat of military intervention to extort debt repayment. By the end of the 19th century, 80 percent of Haiti's national budget was going to pay off its former exploiters, and the country remains a hideously impoverished debtor nation today.

The U.S. militarily intervened into Haiti in 1888, 1891 and 1914. In 1915, the U.S. initiated a bloody occupation of the country that would last until 1934. The U.S. military regime in Haiti was, according to one historian, "probably the bloodiest in all of the Caribbean" (Donald Schulz and Douglas Granham [eds.], *Revolution and Counterrevolution in Central America and the Caribbean* [1984]).

The occupation and the subsequent imposition of forced labor provoked a national uprising by *cacos* (peasant bands) beginning in 1916, which lasted five years before being drowned in blood. As described by Mumia Abu-Jamal, America's foremost class-war prisoner, in a 1994 column ("American Hatred of Haiti," *WV* No. 609, 28 October 1994):

> "When the people rebelled against this involuntary servitude in the Cacos Insurrection, the U.S. Marines responded by ruthless repression, that left an estimated 15,000 peasant casualties.
>
> "One U.S. Marine officer, Cotonel Littleton W.T. Waller (Virginia) wrote of his impressions of the people historians now say they came to 'help'; the Haitians were 'real n----rs and make no mistake—there are some fine looking, well educated polished men here, but they are real n--s beneath the surface.'
>
> "A perfect example of exported American 'democracy'."

Since then, the U.S. has propped up one Haitian despot after another, each further bleeding the country dry of whatever resources were left. Among these brutal dictators was the infamous "Papa Doc" Duvalier, who organized the Tonton Macoutes thugs and killed 50,000 opponents. His demented son "Baby Doc" was forced to flee to France amid a mass upheaval in 1986. One report estimated that "Baby Doc" stole the equivalent of up to 4.5 percent of the Haitian GDP for every year he was in power. As Graham Greene put it in his novel *The Comedians*, the U.S. was responsible for setting up "the nightmare republic." Americans can read the novel; Haitians had to live it.



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Left: Storming of Bastille prison, opening event of French Revolution, 14 July 1789. Toussaint L'Ouverture (inset) forged army of black slaves to win freedom and independence for Haiti. Right: Emile Antoine Bayard's "Revolt of the Negroes in San Domingo." Haitian Revolution combined the struggle against slavery with the ideals of the French Revolution.

The massive discontent that drove "Baby Doc" Duvalier out of power ultimately led to the election of radical Catholic priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide in December 1990. Virtually the entire left internationally gave him political support. WWP hailed Aristide for supposedly promising to introduce such things as "economic justice," "honest" government and "broad participation of the people" (*Workers World*, 27 December 1990). The WWP article quoted from a solidarity message they sent to Aristide hailing his "great courage in bringing the flood of the mass struggle into the election campaign." Likewise, the ISO celebrated Aristide's election, claiming that he was "fully aware that for democracy to survive in Haiti, the whole system had to be restructured" (*Socialist Worker*, November 1991).

In contrast, we warned: "Aristide will either play the role of groveling instrument of the Haitian bourgeoisie and the U.S. imperialist overlords or he will be swept away in a reactionary crackdown aimed at decisively disciplining the pitilessly oppressed population" ("Haiti: Election Avalanche for Radical Priest," *WV* No. 517, 4 January 1991). Both proved to be true.

Initially, Aristide irked the U.S. rulers by resisting their economic diktats and establishing diplomatic relations with Cuba. This was one of the few benefits from the Aristide regime since it meant that Cuban doctors and nurses began working in Haiti. Aristide was toppled in 1991. In 1994, following a starvation embargo against Haiti, President Clinton re-installed Aristide at the point of bayonets, with Marines occupying the country in a military intervention dubbed "Operation Uphold Democracy." Aristide supported both the embargo and the invasion. He proved his reliability to his U.S. overseers by agreeing in advance of his 1994 return to power to a drastic austerity program, privatization of state-owned industry, massive layoffs in the public sector and the virtual abolition of import tariffs. The latter induced the collapse of the indigenous economy as the market was flooded with, for example, American rice at prices cheaper than the Haitian-grown product. Having dissolved the army (a center of opposition to his regime) in 1995, Aristide propped up his rule with a brutal police force and gang terror.

Again in 2004, as Haiti was being swept by armed revolts (some with the support of Washington neoconservatives), Bush sent U.S. Marines to invade Haiti as a U.S. military escort whisked President Aristide out of the country and into exile in Africa. Prominent in pushing the hesitating Bush administration to send the Marines were the Democrats of the Congressional Black Caucus, though ostensibly in defense of Aristide. The 1994 and 2004 U.S. invasions, both of which were carried out with UN backing, were largely motivated by the U.S. rulers' determination to prevent Haitians from reaching America's shores. We pointed out that the U.S. occupation of Haiti also represented a danger to the Cuban deformed workers state, as well as to the militant proletariat of the Dominican Republic, which shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti (see "Haiti: U.S./UN Troops Out!" *WV* No. 821, 5 March 2004).

Following the 2004 U.S. invasion, an occupation force was set up under UN sponsorship, bringing with it a beefed-up Haitian police force composed of sadistic rapists and killers. The UN, since its creation at the end of World War II, has always been a fig leaf for naked imperialist aggression against semicolonial countries. During the current earthquake disaster, the U.S.-armed thugs of the Haitian police have coldbloodedly gunned down "looters," including a 15-year-old girl who was shot in the head as she carried a few wall hangings from the ruins.

The imperialist system, which imposes grinding poverty and degradation on its colonial and semicolonial subjects, must be swept away through international proletarian revolution. Toward that end, Haitian workers in the U.S., Canada and elsewhere will serve as a vital bridge linking the struggle for national and social emancipation in Haiti with the fight for socialist revolution in the imperialist centers of North America that have turned that country into a neocolonial hell.

National Archives

AP

Haiti under boot of U.S. imperialism. Left: Marines (circa 1919) during brutal 1915-34 occupation. Above: U.S. military policeman savages Haitian man during Clinton's "Operation Uphold Democracy," which restored Aristide to power in 1994.

For Revolutionary Internationalism

In a January 20 article posted on its Web site, the centrist Internationalist Group (IG) argued that the earthquake provides an opening for socialist revolution in Haiti. The IG wrote that Haiti's "small but militant proletariat can place itself at the head of the impoverished urban and rural masses seeking to organize their own power, particularly at present where the machinery of the capitalist state is largely reduced to rubble and a few marauding bands of police."

The stark reality that the IG would deny is that a) even before the earthquake, there was virtually no working class in Haiti; b) in the aftermath of the earthquake, not only is the state "largely reduced to rubble," but so is the society as a whole, including the desperate and dispossessed population; and c) there is a military power in Haiti that is far from "reduced to rubble," and it's U.S. imperialism.

The IG demands that "*all U.S./U.N. forces get out*," painting the U.S. military presence in Haiti today as aimed at suppressing a popular uprising: "This huge military occupation is not intended to deliver aid, but to *put down unrest by the poor and working people of Haiti*" (emphasis in original). By the IG's reasoning, the Cuban government is to be condemned for opening its airspace to American military planes after the earthquake. The IG is cynically toying with rhetoric, blithely unconcerned with the fact that, in the real world, if the policies they advocate were implemented, they would result in mass death through starvation.

Notwithstanding the IG's deranged and grotesque fantasies, there are no good alternatives facing Haiti today. The U.S. military is the only force on the ground with the capacity—e.g., trucks, planes, ships—to organize the transport of what food, water, medical and other supplies are getting to Haiti's population. And they're doing it in the typical piggish U.S. imperialist manner. We have always opposed U.S. and UN occupations in Haiti and everywhere—and it may become necessary to call for U.S./UN out of Haiti in the near future—but we are not going to call for an end to such aid as the desperate Haitian masses can get their hands on. As Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky explained in his 1938 article "Learn to Think: A Friendly Suggestion to Certain Ultra-Leftists":

> "An irreconcilable attitude against bourgeois militarism does not signify at all that the proletariat *in all cases* enters into a struggle against its own 'national' army.

continued on page 10

International Communist League pamphlet comprising three articles from ICL press: "The Development and Extension of Leon Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution," "A Trotskyist Critique of Germany 1923 and the Comintern" and "Down With Executive Offices of the Capitalist State!" These articles together constitute an introduction to the historically founded principles and program of Trotskyism (i.e., genuine Marxism).

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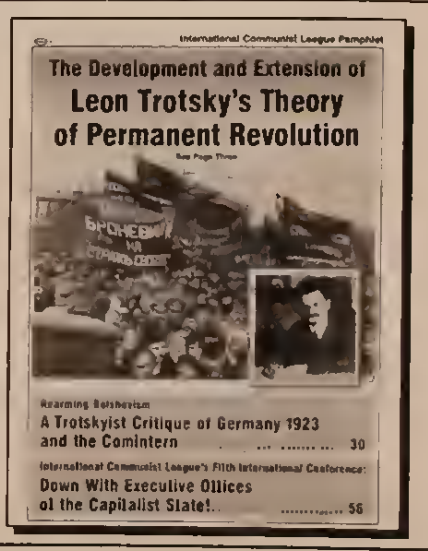

Lenin, Luxemburg...

(continued from page 2)

he is just wasting good time.

"Still, didn't Rosa criticize the Bolsheviks for dispersing the Constituent Assembly?" No, she did not. She criticized them for not calling for elections to a new Constituent; she criticized them for the arguments they made to justify the dispersal. But in the first place, her criticism has next to nothing in common with that of the latter-day anti-Bolsheviks (or, for that matter, of the anti-Bolsheviks of the time). And in the second place, she was wrong, just as she was wrong in her criticism of the Bolshevik position on the "national question" and of the Bolshevik course in the "agrarian question." And in the third place, what she wrote in prison, on the basis of "fragmentary information" (as the editor of the American edition of her prison notes admits), was not her last word on the question. Before her cruel death, she *altered her position* on the basis of her own experiences, on the basis of the living realities of the German revolution. Lenin's *State and Revolution* was checked *twice*—first in the Russian Revolution and then in the German revolution! We will give the reader an idea of what she wrote before her death so that he may see why our present "champions" of Luxemburg never find time, space or inclination *to quote her to the end*.

The German workers, a year after the Bolshevik Revolution, overturned the Hohenzollern monarchy and, just as spontaneously as did the Russians before them, they formed their Workers' and Soldiers' Councils ("Räte," Soviets). The German Mensheviks—Scheidemann, Noske and Ebert—feared and hated the Councils just as much as did their Russian counterparts. They championed the National Assembly (German counterpart of the Russian Constituent) instead, calculating thereby to smash the Councils and the struggle for socialism. Haase and Kautsky, the centrists of the Independent Socialists, oscillated between the Councils and the Assembly. What position did Rosa Luxemburg take, what position did the Spartacus League and its organ, *Die Rote Fahne*, take? Here once more was the problem of workers' democracy versus bourgeois democracy, the democratic republic of the Councils versus the bourgeois republic, dictatorship of the proletariat organized in the Councils versus the National Assembly—not in Russia but in Germany, not in 1917 but a year later, not while Rosa was in Breslau prison but after her release.

VAAP

Russian factory workers at May Day demonstration in 1917 carried Bolshevik slogans, including banner reading, "Long Live the Third International!"

Here is Rosa Luxemburg in *Die Rote Fahne* of November 29, 1918, writing on the leaders of the Independents:

> "Their actual mission as partner in the firm of Scheidemann-Ebert is: to mystify its clear and unambiguous character as defense guard of bourgeois class domination by means of a system of equivocation and cowardliness.
>
> "This role of Haase and colleagues finds its most classical expression in their attitude toward the most important slogan of the day: toward the National Assembly.
>
> "Only two standpoints are possible in this question, as in all others. Either you want the National Assembly as a means of swindling the proletariat out of its power, to paralyze its class energy, to dissolve its socialist goal into thin air. Or else you want to place all the power into the hands of the proletariat, to unfold the revolution that has begun into a tremendous class struggle for the socialist social order, and toward this end, to establish the political rule of the great mass of the toilers, the dictatorship of the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils. For or against socialism, against or for the National Assembly: there is no third way."

On December 1st, Luxemburg spoke on the situation at a meeting of the Spartacus League in the hall of the Teachers' Union. At the end of the meeting, a resolution was adopted setting forth her views and giving approval to them:

> "The public people's meeting held on December 1st in the Hall of the Teachers' Union on Alexander Street declares its agreement with the exposition of Comrade Luxemburg. It considers the convocation of the National Assembly to be a means of strengthening the counterrevolution and to cheat the proletarian revolution of its socialist aims. It demands the transfer of all power to the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils, whose first duty it is to drive out of the government the traitors to the working class and to socialism, Scheidemann-Ebert and colleagues, to arm the toiling people for the protection of the revolution, and to take the most energetic and thoroughgoing measures for the socialization of society."

In her first editorial in *Die Rote Fahne* of November 18, she writes under the title, "The Beginning":

> "The Revolution has begun.... From the goal of the revolution follows clearly its path, from its task follows the method. All power into the hands of the masses, into the hands of the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils, protection of the work of the revolution from its lurking foes: this is the guiding line for all the measures of the revolutionary government....
>
> "(But) What is the present revolutionary government (i.e., Scheidemann & Co.) doing?
>
> "It calmly continues to leave the state as an administrative organism from top to bottom in the hands of yesterday's guards of Hohenzollern absolutism and tomorrow's tools of the counterrevolution
>
> "It is convoking the Constituent Assembly, and therewith it is creating a bourgeois counterweight against the Workers' and Peasants' representation, therewith switching the revolution on to the rails of the bourgeois revolution, conjuring away the socialist goals of the revolution."

[Shachtman mistakenly attributed the following quote to the article, "The Beginning." It is actually from "The National Assembly" in the 20 November 1918 issue of *Die Rote Fahne*—ed.]

> "From the *Deutsche Tageszeitung*, the *Vossische*, and the *Vorwärts* to the *Freiheit* of the Independents, from Reventlow, Erzberger, Scheidemann to Haase and Kautsky, there sounds the unanimous call for the National Assembly and an equally unanimous outcry of fear of the idea: Power into the hands of the working class. The 'people' as a whole, the 'nation' as a whole, should be summoned to decide on the further fate of the revolution by majority decision.
>
> "With the open and concealed agents of the ruling class, this slogan is natural. With keepers of the capitalist class barriers, we discuss neither in the National Assembly nor about the National Assembly....
>
> "Without the conscious will and the conscious act of the majority of the proletariat—no socialism. To sharpen this consciousness, to steel this will, to organize this act, a class organ is necessary, the national parliament of the proletarians of town and country.
>
> "The convocation of such a workers' representation in place of the traditional National Assembly of the bourgeois revolutions is already, by itself, an act of the class struggle, a break with the historical past of bourgeois society, a powerful means of arousing the proletarian popular masses, a first open, blunt declaration of war against capitalism.
>
> "No evasions, no ambiguities—the die must be cast. Parliamentary cretinism was yesterday a weakness, is today an equivocation, will tomorrow be a betrayal of socialism."

It is a pity that there is not space in which to quote far more extensively from the highly remarkable articles she wrote in the last few weeks of her life, before she was murdered by those whose "parliamentary cretinism" became the direct betrayal of socialism—by those for whom Erber has now become a shameful apologist by "showing" that the defeat of the revolution in Germany was as much the responsibility of the masses as it was of the Scheidemanns and Noskes! The articles as a whole show the veritable *strides* that Luxemburg took away from her prison criticism and toward a policy which was in *no* important respect different from the one pursued by the Bolsheviks toward the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois democrats, toward the Mensheviks and other "socialist opponents," toward the Constituent Assembly and the Soviets. With these articles of hers in print, to mention her today as an enemy of the Bolsheviks, as a critic of their attitude toward bourgeois democracy and the Constituent is excusable only on the grounds of inexcusable ignorance.

The course of the German Revolution, life, the lessons of the struggle—these left us the heritage of a Rosa Luxemburg who was, in every essential, the inseparable comrade-in-arms of the leaders of the Russian Revolution. To claim that this firm solidarity did not exist, is simply an outrage to her memory. What is worse, it shows that nothing has been learned of the lessons of the Russian Revolution and nothing of the lessons of the German Revolution—the two great efforts of the proletariat to test in practice what is, in the long run, the question of life and death for us: the state and revolution. And on this question, with Lenin *and* with Luxemburg, the real Luxemburg—we remain under the banner of Marxism.■

Haiti...

(continued from page 9)

> At least the workers would not interfere with soldiers who are extinguishing a fire or rescuing drowning people during a flood; on the contrary, they would help side by side with the soldiers and fraternize with them....
>
> "In ninety cases out of a hundred the workers actually place a minus sign where the bourgeoisie places a plus sign. In ten cases however they are forced to fix the same sign as the bourgeoisie but with their own seal, in which is expressed their mistrust of the bourgeoisie. The policy of the proletariat is not at all automatically derived from the policy of the bourgeoisie, bearing only the opposite sign (this would make every sectarian a master strategist). No, the revolutionary party must each time orient itself *independently* in the internal as well as in the external situation, arriving at those decisions which correspond best to the interests of the proletariat."

The IG's conjuring up of a proletarian revolutionary opposition in Haiti today is the demented logic of their glorification of Third World nationalism. In practice, they deny the horrendous impact that nearly two centuries of depredation by the U.S. and other capitalist powers has had on Haiti. The bitter truth is that the desperate conditions of Haiti today cannot be resolved *within* Haiti. The key to the liberation of Haiti lies in proletarian revolution throughout the hemisphere, in which the mobilization of the sizable Haitian proletariat *in the diaspora* can play a key role. In addition to the brutally oppressed Haitian sugar cane workers in the Dominican Republic and those elsewhere in the Caribbean, hundreds of thousands of Haitian workers now live in cities from Montreal to Miami. These workers can be a vital link to class struggle by the powerful North American proletariat.

The IG's article does not even mention the hundreds of thousands of Haitian workers in the urban centers of North America. In contrast, as a Spartacist speaker explained at an October 1991 forum in New York City ("Haitian Workers: Fight for Power!" *WV* No. 537, 25 October 1991):

> "Haitian nationalists are forever lamenting the fact that the Haitian diaspora exists. Comrades, it is very *good* that you have this diaspora! It internationalizes the struggle of Haitian workers, gives them social power and helps forge an international vanguard directly linked to the U.S. proletariat, which has the power to bring imperialism to its knees....
>
> "Haitian workers throughout the diaspora are today a vital link between revolutionary class struggle in Haiti and throughout the Caribbean, and the North American continent. Organizing the most conscious elements into an international Bolshevik party, a Trotskyist party, is the task the International Communist League sets itself in the struggle for worldwide socialist revolution."

It is only this revolutionary internationalist program that holds out any genuine perspective for the liberation of the Haitian masses.■

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With an update on the fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal

France...

(continued from page 3)

involved, including notably more deportations of immigrant women after being "rescued" by the police in anti-trafficking raids. The Ligue Trotskyste de France calls for full citizenship rights for all immigrants! No deportations! The state is not a neutral arbiter; it is an instrument for the suppression of the exploited and oppressed by the exploiters. The social-democratic organization from which Olivier Besancenot's New Anti-Capitalist Party (NPA) comes, the former Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, has for years campaigned for a "law against violent abuse of women," the effect of which was in fact to increase illusions in the capitalist state and pave the way for the repressive laws of Sarkozy & Co. As we wrote in "Anti-Immigrant, Anti-Woman, Anti-Sex: U.S./UN Crusade Against 'Sex Trafficking'":

> "The 'sex slavery' crusade is a cynical and dangerous business because it both legitimizes government persecution of immigrants and invokes state authority to intervene as moral arbiter in our most intimate affairs. It bolsters the anti-sex witchhunt as a whole and deflects attention from the real violence perpetrated every day against women and children under this class system....
>
> "The liberation of the prostitute can't be separated from the liberation of women as a whole, and prostitution will die only as the institution of the family is replaced. For women's liberation through socialist revolution!"
>
> —*Spartacist* (English-language edition) No. 58, Spring 2004

Anti-"Pedophile" Witchhunts and the State

The supposed mortal threat to children from "pedophiles" has been a central theme of repeated moral crusades in past decades. The Outreau witchhunt and show trial [in which 18 people were sent to jail for sexual abuse of children for several years based on the accusations of one woman who later confessed to having lied] was set in motion by the [popular front] government of [Socialist prime minister] Jospin in 1997, under the instructions of then-family minister Ségolène Royal. Royal instructed all teachers, school nurses, etc., to report in writing any allegations of sexual fondling, however incoherent or absurd, to the district attorney.

When it comes to obscene child abuse, the capitalist system and its governments are the main culprits—from locking up babies and children in immigration detention prisons to deporting them to war zones, such as Afghanistan where they risk being butchered under imperialist bombs. Or there is the fact that today nearly one in five (18 percent) of all children live below the official poverty line, a rate which is close to 50 percent among minority youth in the ghettos.

The Outreau case was in no way an aberration; this scandal laid bare the horror of capitalist "justice" and if anything, the scaremongering and reactionary anti-sex campaign has picked up momentum since then. Back in October, Sarkozy declared his support for "chemical castration" to combat "pedophiles" and rapists. This new barbaric measure, which would also return someone to prison after they have served their sentence if they refuse to continue taking the drug, is currently under debate in the National Assembly.

In the wake of the Mitterrand affair, the government has tightened the screws even further on minorities and immigrants—not only in its everyday business, but also to neutralize the fascists ahead of the regional elections in six months. The government's right-wing constituency was not happy that the government refused to fire Mitterrand and that foreign minister Bernard Kouchner asked his American counterpart, Hillary Clinton, to leave Polanski alone. The government has now gone on the offensive with its announcement of a three-month-long "debate on national identity" to reappropriate "Marianne [the female figure that symbolizes the French Republic], the flag and the national anthem" from the fascists. This "debate" is aimed at scapegoating immigrants and youth in the *banlieues* [suburban ghettos] as lying at the root of insecurity in this country.

AP

November 2007: Police rampage against protesters in working-class Paris suburb of Villiers-le-Bel one day after two minority youth were hit and killed by police car.

Reuters

Paris: Victims of Outreau anti-pedophile witchhunt after acquittal, December 2005. Lydia Mourmand holds photo of her brother, François, who died in prison.

To fight against racist oppression and the oppression of women, gays and minorities, we must build a revolutionary workers party independent of the bourgeois parties and the social democrats, who are wedded to upholding and defending the oppressive capitalist system. The working class has the social power to mobilize in defense of all the oppressed. But to convince workers that they have a stake in defending Mitterrand or Polanski, it is necessary to fight against our reformist opponents in the workers movement, such as the PS, PCF and Alternative Libertaire, which fully participated in the campaign against Mitterrand and Polanski.

Olivier Besancenot's NPA refused to join this campaign, but, at the same time, its position had nothing to do with Marxism. As usual, it distinguished itself by voicing varying positions on the question. In its weekly newspaper, distributed mainly to its members and periphery, the NPA ran an interview with an academic who had studied the Thai homosexual milieu and who took on the attacks against Mitterrand, describing them as "dubious" (*Tout Est à Nous*, 22 October 2009). But it was the NPA's official spokesman, Olivier Besancenot, who laid out the NPA's real line: the refusal to defend Mitterrand against the homophobic campaign. Besancenot declared in a television interview: "I must admit that I am deeply troubled. I must confess that I haven't read the book and haven't listened to all his explanations.... I've of course read the excerpts [of Mitterrand's book] and it's true that they are super-ambiguous when we know what sexual tourism and pedophilia are.... I'm neither his lawyer nor his judge and I prefer to judge on the basis of his politics, on his job as Minister of Culture."

As far as we know, Lutte Ouvrière (LO) has not said a word on Polanski's arrest. In their weekly paper, which is addressed to workers, LO has not mentioned the anti-homosexual witchhunt against Mitterrand either. LO's silence is itself a capitulation to anti-homosexual bigotry, which is propagated in the working class by the homophobic campaigns of the bourgeoisie. However, LO mentioned the Mitterrand affair in their monthly "theoretical" journal *Lutte de Classe* (Novemher 2009). In an article on the debate on "national identity," they give a series of reasons why Sarkozy recently "angered part of his right-wing constituency," and, notably, "the fact that he chose as a culture minister, one Frederic Mitterrand, who does not hide his homosexuality, and that he defended him when the media were full of confessions by the latter for his taste for Thai 'kids'." LO knows full well that Mitterrand, far from having "confessed" his "taste for Thai 'kids'," stated the exact opposite during his October 8 television interview, insisting that he only had relationships with people "of my age" (*Le Figaro*, 9 October 2009). And in his book, he speaks only of pubescent teenagers, for instance, students.

LO makes these statements using the sensational language typical of the gutter press without even pretending to defend Mitterrand. LO implicitly peddles the accusations against Mitterrand by the fascists, PS and others about his supposed "sex tourism" with Thai children. Thus LO plays its hypocritical little role in this homophobic campaign.

When even the "far left" capitulates, at least by omission, to the moral order campaign against Mitterrand, it is because they seek to reform, not overthrow, the capitalist order and therefore cannot challenge the institution of the bourgeois family. Capitalism is not only exploiting workers by appropriating the surplus value they produce with their sweat and blood. It also discriminates against various layers of the population for their skin color, gender, sexual practices, etc. This should rather be an opportunity for the working class to lead all the oppressed in a revolutionary struggle to overthrow the oppressive capitalist system.■

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

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The Capitalist State: An Instrument of Organized Terror Against Workers and the Oppressed

University of Illinois at Chicago
Prairie Room, Student Center East
750 S. Halsted Street
(Exit Halsted Street at UIC-Halsted stop on CTA Blue Line)

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Visit the ICL Web Site:
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Sunday, February 7, 12 p.m.

The Russian Revolution

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Wednesday, February 10, 6 p.m.

The Russian Revolution

UCLA
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Why Marxists Advocate Quebec Independence

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Supreme Court of Death Rules Against Mumia Abu-Jamal

The following statement was issued by the Partisan Defense Committee on January 24.

On January 19, the U.S. Supreme Court took a clear step toward the legal lynching of Mumia Abu-Jamal. The Court vacated a 2001 decision by federal district court judge William Yohn overturning Mumia's death sentence. Yohn's decision had been previously upheld by the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals. The new ruling by the Supreme Court underscores our insistence that fighters for Mumia's freedom must place no faith in the courts, which, at every level, have colluded with the police and prosecutors to see through the execution of this innocent man.

Mumia was targeted by the police and FBI in his teenage years as a Black Panther leader and later as a journalist and MOVE supporter renowned for his searing exposés of cop brutality and racist oppression. In a blatantly racist and political frame-up, Mumia was railroaded to death row in 1982 on false charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. Without a shred of actual evidence against him, he was convicted on the basis of phony ballistics and other manufactured "evidence," a "confession" concocted by cops and prosecutors, massive police intimidation of witnesses and racist jury rigging. His trial was overseen by "hanging judge" Albert Sabo, who was overheard saying he would help the prosecution "fry the n----r." To secure the death sentence, prosecutors pointed to political statements issued by Mumia as a 16-year-old Panther.

Since his trial, the courts have repeatedly tossed aside massive evidence of Mumia's innocence, not least the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Faulkner. Yet Mumia remains unbowed, speaking out for the oppressed and the impoverished through his death row commentaries. The Partisan Defense Committee—a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League/U.S.—calls on trade unionists, death penalty abolitionists and all opponents of racist injustice to make their voices heard in demanding: Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty!

The Supreme Court moved against Mumia with cold calculation. Last April, it turned down Mumia's petition to overturn his frame-up conviction. At the same time, the Court held in abeyance the arguments of Pennsylvania prosecutors to reinstate his death sentence, which had been overturned by Yohn on the grounds that Mumia's trial jury had been given faulty sentencing instructions. The Supreme Court waited to rule against Mumia until after it reinstated the death sentence for Ohio neo-Nazi Frank Spisak, which had been overturned on similar grounds of faulty jury instructions. In effect, the high court gave the Third Circuit their marching orders to uphold Mumia's death sentence. Alternatively, the Third Circuit could send the case back to Yohn for a hearing to consider other still-pending claims by Mumia or, less likely, reaffirm its prior decision.

The Supreme Court cynically tied together the Spisak and Mumia cases, not despite but because of their glaring differences. Spisak is a sociopath who admitted to killing his victims and made no secret of his admiration for Adolph Hitler. Mumia has always maintained his innocence and won acclaim as the "voice of the voiceless" for his powerful commentaries. The Court is consciously manipulating abhorrence of the fascist Spisak's crimes to set a precedent for the legal murder of Mumia, a man whose "crime" was to stand up to the racist capitalist rulers. Noting how his case differed from Spisak's, Mumia aptly told Free Speech Radio News, "The law is the tool of those in power, so how they use it doesn't depend on the law; it depends on power." The Supreme Court ruling will touch off new rounds of perhaps lengthy legal proceedings. But even if Mumia wins his battle against execution, the "alternative" offered by the courts is a life sentence with no possibility of parole, which, as Mumia noted in one of his prison writings, "is merely slow death."

The court's linking of the two cases highlights yet again how the fight for Mumia's freedom is inseparable from the struggle to abolish the death penalty. The PDC opposes the death penalty on principle and everywhere—for the guilty as well as for the innocent. We do not accord any state the right to determine who lives and who dies.

Capital punishment is a barbaric relic of ancient codes of justice and, in the U.S., of chattel slavery. Where in medieval times those who ran afoul of Crown and Church were put to the rack or burned at the stake, today's representatives of bourgeois "civilization" debate which combination of lethal drugs to administer to writhing prisoners strapped to death gurneys. In threatening such treatment for Mumia, the courts hark back to when black slaves could be tortured and put to death for hitting a white man in self-defense or for any other act deemed a challenge to the slaveholders. The hugely disproportionate number of black people on America's death rows is a testament to the racist subjugation of the black population, which is fundamental to the maintenance of American capitalism. And while judges in their oak-paneled chambers decree the legal murder of the poor, minorities and working people, the police carry out the same sentence on a far greater scale as they gun down ghetto and barrio youth in the streets.

The death penalty stands at the apex of the machinery of state repression used by the tiny class of capitalist exploiters against the masses they exploit and oppress. The "justice" system threatens Mumia with the ultimate state sanction that it used against earlier militants deemed to be threats to capitalist "order"—the Haymarket Martyrs (1877), IWW militant Joe Hill (1915) and anarchist workers Sacco and Vanzetti (1927), to name a few. The state vendetta against Mumia began as part of the FBI's COINTELPRO campaign to wipe out the Black Panther Party, in which some 38 Panthers were killed and hundreds of others framed up and railroaded to prison. The government's intent was made clear in 1968 by FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, who warned: "The Negro youth and moderate[s] must be made to understand that if they succumb to revolutionary teachings, they will be dead revolutionaries."

Mumia's cause has been and must continue to be a focal point of the fight for abolition of the racist death penalty. Popular support for capital punishment has fallen steadily in recent years, due not least to the many cases where DNA evidence has exonerated death row prisoners. Even the conservative American Law Institute, whose death penalty guidelines were cited by the Supreme Court when it ended a brief moratorium on executions in 1976, has decided to get out of this gruesome business as ever more exposures of American injustice come to light. The Supreme Court, however, is not in the least deterred from its push to execute the innocent. Some six weeks before ruling against Mumia, the Court refused to consider the appeal of black California death row inmate Kevin Cooper despite evidence of his innocence and of a massive police frame-up. Free Kevin Cooper!

From the time we first took up Mumia's cause more than 20 years ago, the PDC has supported the use of every possible legal avenue available to Mumia while having no illusions in the courts or any other agency of the capitalist state. Our fight has centered on the struggle to mobilize the multiracial working class in the U.S. and working people internationally, based on the fact that the proletariat is the one force in this society with the social power to effectively challenge the

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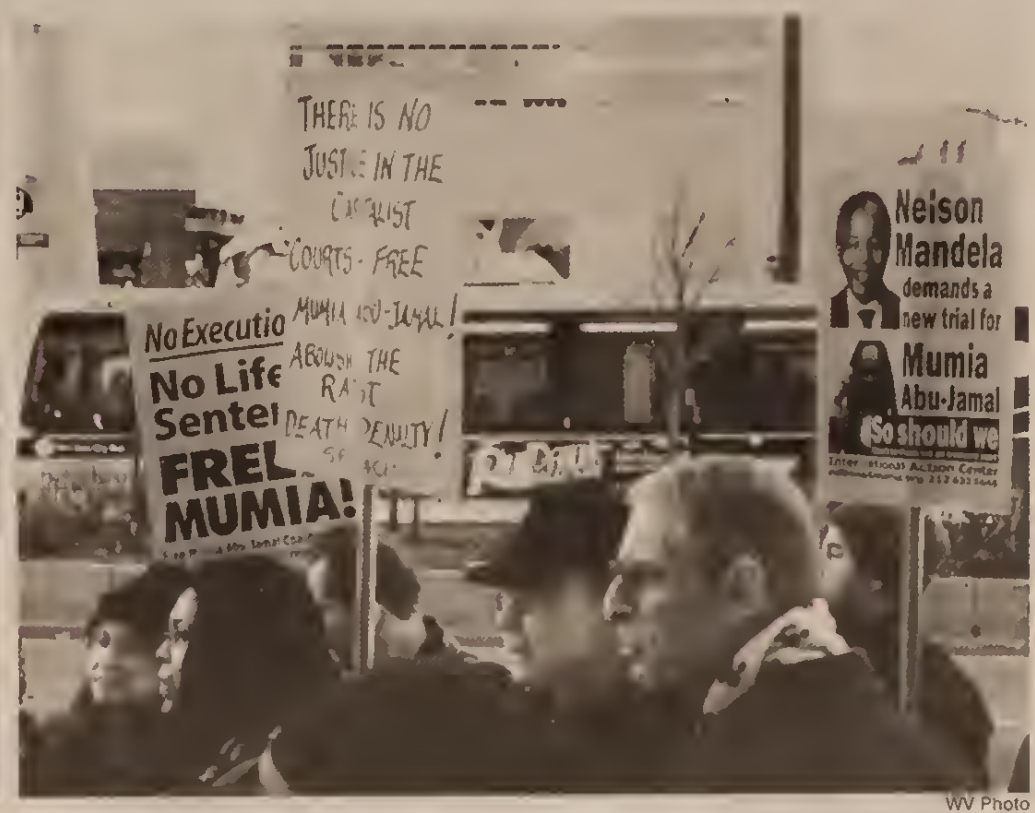

WV Photo

Mumia in prison. Right: New York City rally called by Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition (NYC) after January 19 Supreme Court decision.

Mumia Is Innocent—Free Him Now!

Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

WORKERS VANGUARD

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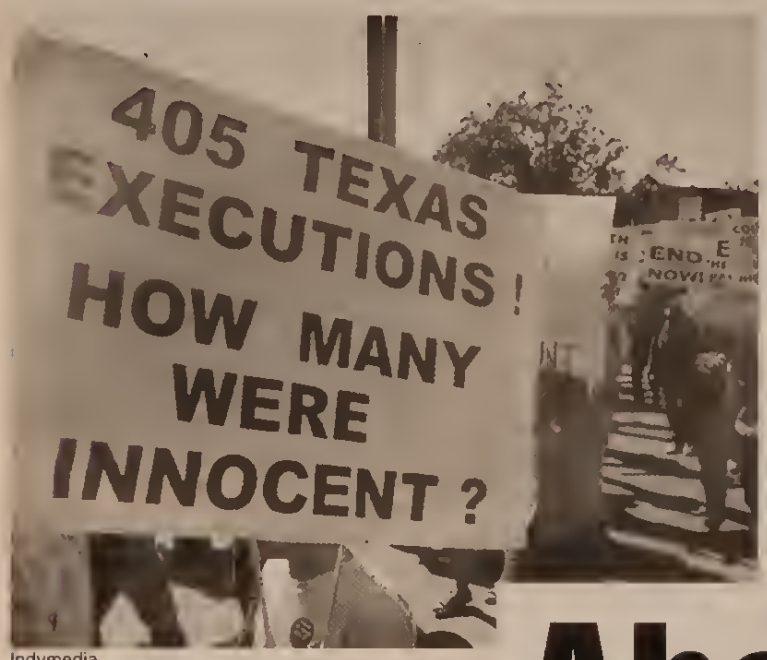
No. 952 GCU C-701 12 February 2010

Capital Punishment and the Capitalist State



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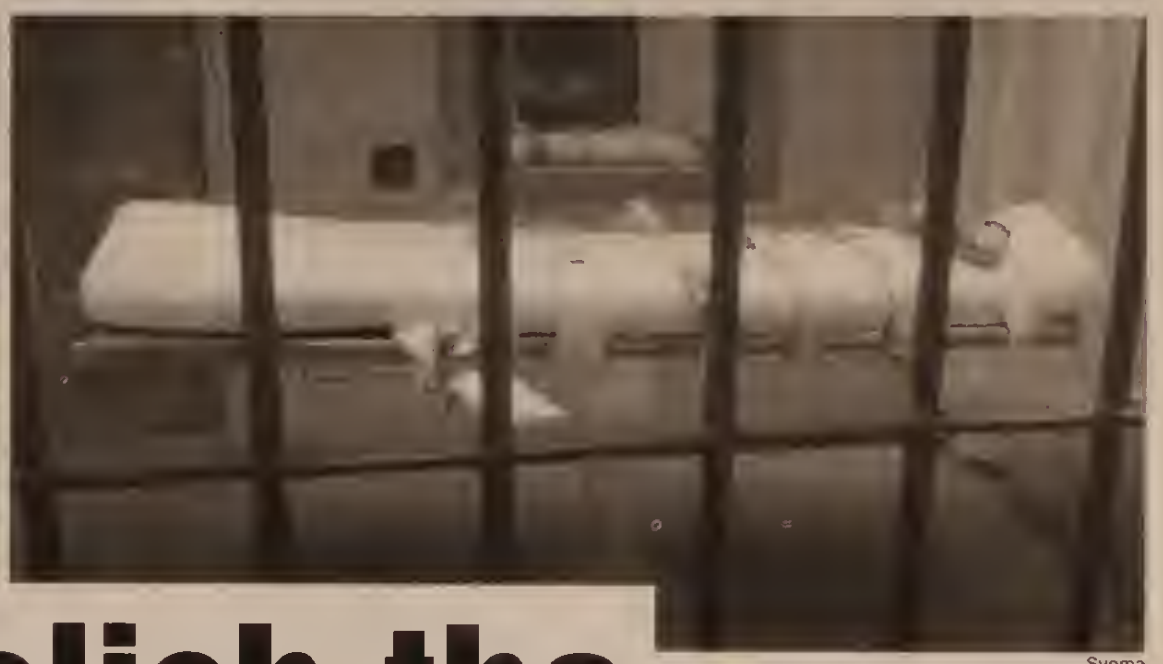

Sygma

Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

Left: Anti-death penalty protest in Houston, Texas, October 2008. Right: Texas lethal injection chamber.

In 1976, the American Law Institute provided the U.S. Supreme Court with the "intellectual framework" to restart the state's machinery of death—which had been idled since 1967 and officially put on hold by a 1972 Supreme Court decision. Over three decades later, in the fall of 2009, the Institute, in the words of the *New York Times* (2 January), "pronounced its project a failure and walked away from it." This "project," as it is so benignly called, provided judges, prosecutors and law professors with a "learned" rationale for the state-sanctioned murder of close to 1,200 people and for the continued incarceration in death row dungeons of more than 3,000 others, the majority of them black and Latino.

A study by the Institute discovered, as if it were news, that "capital punishment was plagued by racial disparities; was enormously expensive even as many defense lawyers were underpaid and some were incompetent; risked executing innocent people; and was undermined by the politics that come with judicial elections."

Racial disparities? Raw racism has been at the core of the death penalty in the U.S. since the days of slavery. In 1986, a suit was brought before the Supreme Court by black Georgia death row prisoner Warren McCleskey. Drawing on an authoritative statistical study by law professor David Baldus, McCleskey's lawyers provided raw figures showing, among other evidence of racial disparities, that black people in Georgia convicted of killing whites were sentenced to death *22 times* more frequently than those convicted of killing blacks. In rejecting McCleskey's appeal in 1987, the Supreme Court openly acknowledged that to accept his premise would throw "into serious question the principles that underlie our entire criminal justice system."

Incompetent, underpaid defense attorneys? Nothing new here. A study of death penalty cases in Texas, the kill-capital of the U.S., showed that one-quarter of those sentenced to death were represented by attorneys who had at some time been "reprimanded, placed on probation, suspended or banned from practicing law by the State Bar." Innocence? That was ruled out by the Supreme Court's 1993 *Herrera* decision, which held that executing an innocent man was not unconstitutional.

The decision of the American Law Institute to "walk away from"—but not oppose—the death penalty reflects increasing exposure of blatant frame-ups of the innocent and the barbarism of the state's executioners. Since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976, more than 130 of those sentenced to die at the hands of the state have been exonerated, over one-third of them in the past ten years. In 2000, after 13 Illinois death row prisoners were found to have been falsely convicted, Republican governor George Ryan first called a moratorium on executions and then commuted the death sentences of Illinois' death row inmates. (Having faced blowback for this decent act, Ryan was sentenced in 2006 to six-and-a-half years in prison on mail and tax fraud and other charges.) Public exposure of grisly torture in death chambers—California executioners digging into the arms of Stanley Tookie Williams to find a vein for lethal injection or Florida death row inmate Angel Nieves Diaz writhing in agony as he was shot up with two doses of poisonous chemicals before dying—led to further temporary moratoriums in other states. The purpose was to allow the capitalist state time to find a more "humane" means of killing.

As Marxists, we oppose the death penalty on principle—for the guilty as well as the innocent. We do not accord the state the right to determine who lives and who dies. We welcome any measure against the death penalty or that curtails the reach of the state's killing machine. But we also understand that this will not fundamentally change the violently racist and oppressive nature of capitalist class rule. It won't change the reality of cops in the inner cities gunning down black and Latino youth who have been written off as permanent "outlaws" by the rulers of this society. Nor will it alter the slower death of the growing ranks of poor and unemployed from homelessness, disease and poverty. We seek to arm the working class with the understanding that it will take nothing short of a proletarian socialist revolution to sweep away the barbaric institutions of the capitalist state, which—with the cops, courts, prisons and military at its core—is nothing other than an apparatus of organized violence for the repression of workers and the oppressed in defense of the power and profits of the capitalist rulers.

Down With Capitalist Repression!

The decline of death sentences and executions at the state level has not done anything to lessen the commitment of the executive power of U.S. imperialism, now headed by Barack Obama, to the death penalty. In fact, the number of federal prisoners on death row continues to grow. Against complaints of trying Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, the purported mastermind of the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, in New York City, Obama declared: "I don't think it would be offensive at all when he's convicted and when the death penalty is applied to him" (*Daily News*, 18 November 2009).

Nor has the Supreme Court been the least bit deterred from pushing to execute the innocent. On January 19, the court vacated a 2001 decision by federal district court judge William Yohn that overturned the death sentence against Mumia Abu-Jamal and virtually wrote the script for its reinstatement by the Third Circuit Court of Appeals. Mumia is an innocent man who was framed up and falsely convicted for the 1981 killing of a Philadelphia cop. The capitalist rulers want to kill or entomb Mumia for life because they see in this eloquent journalist, MOVE supporter and former Black Panther Party spokesman the spectre of black revolt, of defiant opposition to their system of racist capitalist injustice. *Free Mumia now!*

Every court before which Mumia's case has been brought has rejected the mountains of evidence of his innocence and the equally voluminous evidence that the cops, prosecution and judges conspired in framing him up. The reformists and liberals who for years have looked to these same courts for "justice" now turn to the Obama administration and Attorney General Eric Holder. Socialist Action leader Jeff Mackler put it baldly: "Today, having exhausted most all legal remedies, Mumia's supporters are engaged in an important campaign to demand a Justice Department civil rights investigation into charges presented by his supporters that demonstrate illegal collusion between Pennsylvania prosecutors and the judiciary (*Socialist Action*, November 2009).

This hat-in-hand appeal to America's top cop and the Commander-in-Chief of U.S. imperialism is a savage indictment of the reformists' belief in the "democracy" of the capitalist state. Obama's open support for the death penalty won him the backing of right-wing radio broadcaster Michael Smerconish, who has stood at the head of the crusade for Mumia's death. Obama's election was aimed at giving a face-lift to U.S. imperialism, and the message to black people is to shut up and eat it because the coming to power of America's first black president shows that there is equality for those who "earn it."

The Death Penalty in America: The Lynch Rope Made Legal

Opponents of the death penalty often point to the fact that nearly every other advanced industrialized country has abolished capital punishment. Outside of Japan, no other major capitalist power has the death penalty as part of its criminal code. But that doesn't stop these countries' rulers from deploying other means of brutal repression and death at the hands of their cops and other state forces.

Historically, capital punishment is a barbaric relic of ancient religious codes of retributive justice. But its endurance in

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Father of China's Missile Program

Qian Xuesen: An Appreciation

When Qian Xuesen (Tsien Hsue-shen), the father of China's space program, died in October at the age of 98, his story dominated the news on the Chinese mainland. In contrast, Qian's death received subdued notice in the U.S., which had expelled him in the anti-Communist campaigns of the mid 1950s. A household name in China, Qian was widely regarded as a hero for his contributions to military defense and technological development, including China's nuclear capacity. His funeral, held at Babaoshan Revolutionary Cemetery in Beijing, was attended by some 10,000 people, including all the top leaders of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), such as President Hu Jintao, Premier Wen Jiabao and former president Jiang Zemin. As Trotskyists—i.e., revolutionary proletarian internationalists—we also salute Qian for his singular contributions to the defense of China, a bureaucratically deformed workers state, against the imperialist powers, centrally the U.S.

The story of Qian's life and accomplishments is recounted in Iris Chang's compelling 1995 biography, *Thread of the Silkworm*. Qian was born to a privileged family in Hangzhou in 1911, the year the decrepit Qing Dynasty fell. He became part of a generation of intellectuals who were determined to bring China into the modern world, liberated from imperialist domination. To that end, he began his studies in railway engineering at Jiaotong University in Shanghai. The campuses were in upheaval, with students protesting both Japan's 1931 invasion of Manchuria and Chiang Kai-shek's corrupt, brutal Guomindang (Nationalist) regime, which was reviled for its subservience to Japanese imperialism. After witnessing the impact of Japan's aerial bombardment of Shanghai in 1932, Qian turned to aeronautical engineering.

To further its own imperialist interests, the U.S. had established a scholarship program—funded by indemnities extracted from China after the crushing of the Boxer Rebellion in 1900—aimed at cultivating a layer of Chinese intellectuals. Qian Xuesen was chosen to receive a Boxer indemnity scholarship, arriving in the U.S. in 1935. Beginning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Qian transferred to Caltech in Pasadena the following year, where he began a long collaboration with his mentor, Theodore von Kármán, a giant in aeronautics.

Qian was himself a brilliant scientist, one of the founders of Pasadena's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. He made significant contributions to the U.S. imperialist military, including as part of the Manhattan Project, which developed the first atomic bomb during the Second World War. At the end of the war, he was part of a team that went to Germany to interrogate rocket scientists. There he saw concentration camps where slave laborers had assembled V-2 rockets and he interviewed the Nazi scientist Wernher von Braun, who would be welcomed with open arms to the U.S. where Qian would later be driven out. In 1949, Qian wrote a proposal for a winged space plane that, as *Aviation Week and Space Technology* wrote in 2007, inspired research that led to NASA's space shuttle.

Despite his prominence, Qian was subjected to racist abuse throughout his time in the U.S. In an incident he would recall with rage decades later, someone in a movie theater who did not want to sit near an Asian demanded that Qian be ejected from his seat. A factor in his leaving MIT in 1936 was the requirement that students at his level work in industry to gain practical experience. This was nearly impossible for Qian to do since the U.S. aircraft industry would not hire Asians. And even as Qian had security clearance at the Pentagon, he could not buy a house in Pasadena due to racist housing codes.

Qian became a target of the McCarthyite witchhunts that swept the U.S. after American imperialism launched its post-WWII Cold War drive against the Soviet Union. The anti-Communist hysteria reached a fever pitch following the CCP's seizure of power in 1949, which marked the overthrow of capitalist rule in China, and the outbreak of the Korean War the following year. Qian's security clearance was abruptly lifted in June 1950. He came under special scrutiny by the FBI after he refused to testify against a friend alleged to be the leader of an American Communist Party (CP) cell in Pasadena. Qian was interrogated by the FBI and accused of having been a member of the CP, which he denied.

Hounded by the Feds, Qian decided to leave for China for an extended stay but was stopped at the airport by INS immigration cops. He was arrested in September 1950 and imprisoned for two weeks. During that time he lost 20 pounds and was kept in isolation, deprived of sleep and denied visits from all but his family. The INS issued a deportation order against Qian, but he was simultaneously prevented from leaving. He was not alone in that legal limbo. As Iris Chang noted in *The Chinese in America* (2003), following the 1949 Revolution, "some 120 Chinese intellectuals were detained and not permitted to leave for years" on the grounds that their "knowledge might jeopardize national security." Nearly 50 years later, Chinese American scientist Wen Ho Lee was the target of another racist, anti-Communist witchhunt due to which he lost his job at Los Alamos and was thrown in jail on trumped-up charges of spying for China (see "'Chinese Spy' Hysteria Whips Up Anti-Asian Racism," *WV* No. 719, 17 September 1999).

Xinhua

Qian faced constant FBI surveillance and harassment. Forbidden to leave Los Angeles, he was followed on the street, his mail opened, his home watched and his phone calls monitored. In 1955 he wrote a letter asking the Chinese government's help to get him back to China. His wife addressed the envelope to her sister, disguising her handwriting to resemble a child's. Qian and his wife managed to elude the FBI and drop the letter in a mailbox at a coffee shop, from which it eventually reached Chinese premier Zhou Enlai. Following negotiations later that year between Washington and Beijing, which involved a swap for prisoners from the Korean War, Qian was deported and returned to China.

Immediately upon his return, Qian threw himself into scientific work on behalf of the People's Republic. The establishment of a planned, collectivized economy enabled China—a country with a heritage of deep rural poverty and backwardness—to make historic social advances. This is despite the fact that the workers state that issued out of the peasant-based 1949 Revolution was deformed from its inception under the rule of Mao Zedong's CCP. Qian played a significant role in China's technological development, due to his own research and especially his talent for organizing scientific work on a large scale. He was instrumental in developing the Dongfeng series of rockets and missile guidance systems as well as the launching of China's first satellite in 1970. China has since become one of three countries to carry out a manned orbital space flight.

Qian was also involved in China's development and testing of nuclear weapons. The CCP regime understood that developing a nuclear arsenal was crucial for military defense. Less than a decade after destroying Hiroshima and Nagasaki with atomic weapons, the U.S. considered using them during the Korean War, in which China's military intervention turned the tide against the imperialist forces. The fact that the Soviet Union had by then begun to develop its own nuclear weapons helped stay the imperialists' hand.

Qian joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1958, later becoming a member of its Central Committee. Over the years, he went along with every twist and turn of the bureaucratic regime, whose anti-Marxist policies were rooted in the false Stalinist dogma that socialism—a classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—could be built in a single country. In the late 1950s, Mao carried out the disastrous Great Leap Forward—

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TROTSKY

LENIN

The Fight for Revolutionary Leadership in the Civil Rights Movement

By the early 1960s, a large and growing current of young black militants was breaking to the left of the liberal reformism and pacifism of Martin Luther King. Before its expulsion beginning in late 1963, the Revolutionary Tendency (RT), forerunner of the Spartacist League, fought within the rightwardmoving Socialist Workers Party (SWP) against the tailism and abstentionism of the SWP leadership, which accommodated to King's liberal reformism as well as to a growing black nationalist trend. As represented in the following resolution submitted by RT supporters in the Young Socialist Alliance, the SWP's youth organization, we fought for a perspective of revolutionary intervention into the civil rights movement with the aim of forging a black Trotskyist cadre.

(23) The rising upsurge and militancy of the black revolt and the contradictory and confused, groping nature of what is now the left wing in the movement provide the revolutionary vanguard with fertile soil and many opportunities to plant the seeds of revolutionary socialism. Our task is to create a Trotskyist tendency in the broad left wing of the movement, while building that left wing. Our ideas will ***help*** the movement, not ***hurt*** it. We must consider non-intervention in the crisis of leadership a crime of the worst sort....

(25) General demands in the south must be:

A) For *organized* self-defense movements in southern cities—for the tactics of Robert F. Williams; against federal military intervention, which always supports the status quo.

B) Against discrimination in unions and industries—especially companies with government contracts or subsidies.

C) For drives for union organization.

D) For independent political organization—make voter registration meaningful.

(26) The most oppressed stratum of the working class is in motion. It struggles bravely but blindly to remove the unbearable burden of capitalist exploitation from its shoulders. There is only one program which can point the way to the Negro masses north and south: Trotskyism, the vanguard consciousness of the proletarians of all the world. The American working class still idles in a false and quickly dissipating security; the doubly exploited Negro caste has special demands corresponding to its peculiar needs and the pervading crisis of leadership. These circumstances dictate special organizational forms which reflect the independent activity of the Negroes. It is essential that Trotskyists help crystallize and guide these transitional forms, preserving the independence of the black proletariat from bourgeois influences, and preparing the Negro people for the task which they will share with the white sector of the working class—the revolutionary transformation of society.

—"The Negro Struggle and the Crisis of Leadership" (18 August 1963), reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5 (Revised), "What Strategy for Black Liberation? Trotskyism vs. Black Nationalism" (September 1978)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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Third World Cheerleading and Cynical Phrasemongering

Haiti: IG Conjures Up Revolution Amid the Rubble

Confronting the massive toll of death and destruction in the aftermath of the earthquake in Haiti, Marxists were obliged to underline the history of imperialist depredations that left the Haitian masses utterly exposed in the face of this natural disaster. *Workers Vanguard*'s front-page article, "Haiti Earthquake Horror: Imperialism, Racism and Starvation" (*WV* No. 951, 29 January), also documented the role of the Haitian lackeys of imperialism, including the populist Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the former Haitian leader embraced by the reformist left internationally. We told the bitter truth: Haitian society had been pulped by the earthquake. The desperate conditions of Haiti today cannot be resolved *within* Haiti: "The key to the liberation of Haiti lies in proletarian revolution throughout the hemisphere, in which the mobilization of the sizable Haitian proletariat *in the diaspora* can play a key role."

Loomis/L.A. Times

Port-au-Prince: Haitians search for survivors in aftermath of devastating earthquake, January 14.

We exposed the reformist "socialists" who cheered Obama's election as U.S. Commander-in-Chief and now plead for U.S. aid without the exercise of American military might, revealing their touching faith in the bourgeois state. Our article also attacked the grotesque and cynical phrasemongering of the centrist Internationalist Group (IG). In the IG's fantasyland, the earthquake placed workers revolution on the immediate agenda in Haiti: "This small but militant proletariat can place itself at the head of the impoverished urban and rural masses seeking to organize their own power, particularly at present where the machinery of the capitalist state is largely reduced to rubble and a few marauding bands of police" ("Haiti: Workers Solidarity, Yes! Imperialist Occupation, No!" *Internationalist*, January 2010). To this end, the IG demanded that "all U.S./U.N. forces get out," claiming: "This huge military occupation is not intended to deliver aid, but to ***put down unrest by the poor and working people of Haiti***" (emphasis in original). As we wrote in response:

> "Notwithstanding the IG's deranged and grotesque fantasies, there are no good alternatives facing Haiti today. The U.S. military is the only force on the ground with the capacity—e.g., trucks, planes, ships—to organize the transport of what food, water, medical and other supplies are getting to Haiti's population. And they're doing it in the typical piggish U.S. imperialist manner. We have always opposed U.S. and UN occupations in Haiti and everywhere—and it may become necessary to call for U.S./UN out of Haiti in the near future—but we are not going to call for an end to such aid as the desperate Haitian masses can get their hands on."

The IG seizes on this statement in a subsequent polemic posted on its Web site to revile the SL for nothing less than having "gone over from bending under pressure from the ruling class to outright apology for imperialism" ("Spartacist League Backs U.S. Imperialist Invasion of Haiti," 30 January). Not only does the IG lie about our position but, by omission, it lies about its own position, doctoring a quote from its earlier statement in order to disappear its call for a revolutionary uprising "particularly at present where the machinery of the capitalist state is largely reduced to rubble and a few marauding bands of police." The IG's squeamish self-censorship is simply further evidence that this oh-so-revolutionary rhetoric was nothing but vicarious bravado. Has the IG informed the Haitian workers and oppressed masses that now is the time for them to rise up in revolution and drive the U.S. troops into the sea? There is certainly no evidence of this on the IG's Web site, which has yet to even carry a French translation of their articles on the earthquake.

"Democratic" Imperialism and the Aristide Connection

In fact, the IG's declarations are not intended for the Haitian masses but for the consumption of the domestic Third Worldist and reformist swamp the IG inhabits. Take, for example, the Workers World Party (WWP), which joins the IG in proclaiming "U.S. Troops Invade Haiti—Pentagon Sabotages Relief Effort, Escalates Suffering" (*Workers World*, 4 February). With greater honesty than the IG, WWP openly urges the Obama administration to engage in a purely humanitarian mission in Haiti. *Workers World* approvingly quotes Kim Ives of the weekly paper *Haiti Liberté* saying, "The earthquake was half a revolution, removing all the government buildings and virtually eliminating the repressive power of the state. That's why the U.S. is rushing in to replace that state power, to control Haiti's future and to prevent the people of Haiti from carrying out the other half."

It should be noted that Ives is a passionate supporter of Aristide, who was toppled from power in 1991 shortly after his election, reinstalled by Democratic president Bill Clinton in 1994 at the point of U.S. Marine bayonets, and removed from office a second time through a U.S.-led invasion force in 2004. We opposed both the 1994 and 2004 invasions and called for the immediate withdrawal of all imperialist troops. Aristide protégé René Préval is now president of Haiti. Our previous article documented the role played by Aristide, Préval & Co. as quislings for the U.S. imperialists in helping to police the impoverished Haitian masses. Yet in its two articles on the earthquake, the IG has only oblique and passing references to Aristide.

It is no accident that the IG largely sidesteps the issue of Aristide. In its second article, the IG warns darkly that the U.S. military may "go beyond the patrolling of Haiti" by the existing United Nations occupation force and "take over the government and impose something like a U.N. protectorate on Haiti." Put simply, this is a crass prettification of the imperialist occupation that resulted from the 2004 U.S.-led invasion. Haiti has been a UN protectorate in all but name for the past six years: the imperialist occupiers have been the real state power there, lording it over the Haitian masses. Préval was hand-picked by Washington in large part because, as a representative of Aristide's "Lavalas" movement, he could hope to retain popular support and dampen unrest. Like Aristide, Préval is simply a toady of the imperialists. Exposing this reality is central to combating the widespread illusions among Haitian working people in the populism represented by Aristide. However, the IG's shrieking about the supposed imperialist "invasion" of a country already under imperialist occupation does just the opposite. It essentially portrays Préval and his predecessor Aristide not as quislings of the imperialist powers but as the embodiment of national independence. The pro-Aristide liberals make this explicit. A petition initiated by the Canada Haiti Action Network on January 21, signed by Noam Chomsky, among others, declares:

> "We demand that US commanders immediately restore executive control of the relief effort to Haiti's leaders, and to help rather than replace the local officials they claim to support....
>
> "We call on the de facto rulers of Haiti to facilitate, as the reconstruction begins, the renewal of popular participation in the determination of collective priorities and decisions."

The petition goes on to call on the imperialists to bring back from exile "Haiti's most popular and most inspiring political leader, Jean-Bertrand Aristide."

The IG, the liberals and the reformists are perpetuating the fraud that Aristide and Préval are capable of some modicum of independent functioning. Under the imperialist occupation of Haiti that began in 2004, disaster relief has not been implemented by imperialism's corrupt and ineffective agents in the Haitian government, who totally lack the requisite means and ability. Yet we don't recall the IG screaming about an imperialist invasion when the U.S. and Canada dispatched warships to Haiti after the country was devastated by four hurricanes in the summer of 2008.

To back up its current claims of an "invasion," the IG simply manufactures its own alternative reality, assuring us that "none" of the U.S. ships "carried cargo for Haiti" and that "U.S. military planes did not deliver anything." Yet, even the IG acknowledges that the UN has been feeding up to 310,000 people. In the IG's fantasy version of events, the question of how those hundreds of tons of supplies got to Haiti remains a mystery. The IG might also ponder why the "nuclear-powered aircraft carrier," the USS *Carl Vinson*, which the IG, in its diatribe against us, adduced as evidence of the U.S. presence in Haiti as purely and simply an invasion force, has already left Haiti along with a number of other U.S. warships.

In our article, we pointed out that U.S. authorities are building a concentration camp at Guantánamo where they can detain any Haitian refugees caught trying to flee the country by sea. At the same time, we noted that the Cuban deformed workers state, despite being under the guns of U.S. imperialism, had opened its airspace to American military planes in order to speed up aid efforts to Haiti. We challenged the IG to declare whether the Cuban government should be condemned for what, in the IG's twisted logic, can only be seen as support to an imperialist invasion of Haiti. So far, the IG has preferred to duck that question. Yet this issue has taken on considerable importance as the U.S. military camp in Guantánamo has emerged as a key logistical hub for U.S. Navy planes flying relief supplies into Port-au-Prince. Because of the Cuban government's overflight permission, which Havana has extended until the end of February, U.S. military and civilian planes carrying relief supplies for Haiti from the U.S. can save considerable time by flying directly to Guantánamo.

AP

Haitian workers in Miami protest jailing of refugees, 2002. As part of North America's multiracial proletariat, Haitian workers in the diaspora can play a vital role in the liberation of Haiti's impoverished masses.

Nationalist Populism vs. Proletarian Internationalism

The cynicism of the IG's vituperations against our refusal to oppose the U.S. military providing aid to the Haitian people is revealed not least by the fact that the IG itself did not oppose the deployment of National Guard troops to New

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Young Spartacus

Canada: Anti-Sex Witchhunt Targets Teachers

We reprint the following article from the Young Spartacus *pages of* Spartacist Canada *No. 163 (Winter 2009/2010), newspaper of our comrades in the Trotskyist League of Canada/Ligue Trotskyste du Canada.*

SPARTACIST CANADA

ctvtoronto.ca Lynett/National Post

Popular teacher David Dewees, hounded to death by puritanical media frenzy. Right: Students at October 2009 memorial for Dewees in Toronto.

On October 3, Toronto high school teacher David Dewees calmly lay down on the tracks at the High Park subway station and waited for the approaching train to end his life. Two days earlier, Dewees had been charged with "invitation to sexual touching" and "luring" based on emails he purportedly sent to a couple of teenagers at a Christian camp where he had volunteered since 1997. Inflaming the crusade against Dewees, the *Toronto Star* had outrageously and falsely claimed that he had also been charged with sexual assault, while prominent *Star* columnist Rosie DiManno continued to smear Dewees after his death.

When this popular teacher was honoured by his former students at Jarvis Collegiate in a memorial at the High Park station, one of them rightly decried the press vendetta, saying Dewees "did not commit suicide, he was murdered by the media." David Dewees is the latest victim of an anti-sex witchhunt that has seen countless people persecuted for things like sending emails that in any rational world would not be crimes at all. His tragic death throws a spotlight on the decades-long campaign to demonize and criminalize teachers and others who might in any way run afoul of the twisted "morality" of the ruling class.

The puritanical witchhunt against "sex offenders" waged by governments at all levels is a variant of the Christian fundamentalist crusades against "sin." For anything from looking at a porn website or sending an email to having an entirely consensual sexual relationship with a student, teachers are treated as though they are child rapists and murderers. Many innocent people have been trapped in the state's snare, framed up, fired and jailed. Their names are put on "sex offender registries" (in Ontario alone the list has some 8,500 names) and their careers are destroyed.

In this witchhunt, the powers of the state are augmented by the Ontario College of Teachers. Carrying out its own "investigations," this august "professional body" posts the names of accused teachers on its widely feared online "blue pages," exposing them to public scrutiny and humiliation. Meanwhile, students in teachers college are advised to avoid any conduct that might whisper of "impropriety," and it is made clear that once they become teachers, their private lives are pretty much an open book.

Only a few weeks before Dewees' death, Leslie Merlino, a Mississauga [Ontario] high school teacher, was sentenced to 12 months probation, convicted of sexual exploitation, breach of probation and failure to comply with a court order. In 2006 Merlino and a 17-year-old student began a relationship. Merlino was convicted of common assault, driven from her job and ordered to stay away from the "victim." Refusing to bow to the court, they continued to see each other, and a short time later, when the (now former) student was 18, they vacationed in Quebec. Back in Toronto they were followed by the cops and Merlino was arrested again, charged and jailed for two-and-a-half months. Now, in addition to a criminal record, Merlino's DNA is on file and her name will be on the Ontario sex registry for 20 years.

The case of Brampton [Ontario] teacher Dina Calautti is another harrowing example of how easily a teacher's life and career may be destroyed by this state inquisition. In 2007 she counseled a 17-year-old student who was depressed after breaking up with his girlfriend. Calautti ended the online correspondence after a week when she realized that the student's romantic MSN messages could put her in danger. When the student's father contacted police over the amount of time his son spent communicating with Calautti, she was suspended from her job and buried under a mountain of wild charges including sexual assault, sexual exploitation and Internet luring. At her trial Calautti, an enormously popular and dedicated teacher, was forced to plead guilty to the luring charge in order to avoid jail time.

The Bourgeois Family, Private Property and the Capitalist State

The number of students and their teachers who have fallen for each other and acted on it over the years is legion. Who among us has not fantasized about a sexy schoolteacher during an interminable afternoon in class? But teachers are supposed to embody and enforce "appropriate" behaviour for their students, i.e., the mythical norm of one man on one woman for life. Merely the entire history of our species has shown that human sexuality does not conform to the moral codes imposed by this ruling class. To condemn as "exploitative" sex (or anything hinting of it) between hormonally charged youth and their teachers is a blatant attempt to control and criminalize completely harmless human behaviour.

The purpose of these moral crusades—which include drives against pornography, prostitution, youth sexuality and abortion—is to regiment the population and to bolster the repressive powers of the capitalist state. This state—including its cops, courts and prisons—is not a neutral arbiter, but the instrument for the suppression of the exploited by the exploiters. As such it plays a key role in enforcing the oppression of women (and youth) alongside organized religion and the patriarchal family, which remains the central instrument for the subjugation of women under capitalism. The family is critical for the ruling class to pass on its property to "legitimate" heirs and to instill obedience to bourgeois codes of morality.

We oppose all the laws which prohibit consensual sexual relations in the name of "protecting" youth, just as we demand that the sex registries, which are a witchhunting prosecutor's dream, be scrapped. We also oppose "age of consent" laws which falsely conflate consensual sex with violent crimes. We do not accord the capitalist state the right to decree the age at which youth can engage in sex. The guiding principle in all these matters should be that of mutual effective consent. This means nothing more and nothing less than mutual agreement and understanding, as opposed to coercion.

Unfortunately we are all but unique in defending the victims of this anti-sex hysteria, whether teachers hounded for private sexual acts or famed director Roman

AP

Caught in U.S. anti-sex witchhunt. Tooele, Utah, 2007: Educator Leslie Baird was sent to jail for having sex with a 17-year-old student.

Polanksi, an innocent man who faces a renewed state vendetta for having had consensual sex with a precocious 13-year-old one day back in 1977 (see *Workers Vanguard* No. 944, 9 October 2009). That they have no other defenders on the left besides our organization is a measure of how deeply the so-called "socialist" groups have adapted to "family values" bourgeois reaction.

To support the capitalist state's right to legislate morality is to support this decaying social order which produces genuinely horrific crimes against women and children. The state is a violent, unrepentant and chronic abuser of youth, and that includes the very real and horrific crime of sexual abuse. Stories emerging from the Roy McMurtry Youth Centre in Brampton, a new $100 million superjail housing 102 youth, are bloodcurdling. Shortly after it opened in May, inmates began launching complaints about abuse that included food deprivation, restrictions on family visits and full-body cavity searches under the ludicrous pretence of looking for missing DVDs.

At the same time, a racist "law and order" offensive is targeting mainly black, Native and other minority youth for cop violence. The Conservatives' "anti-crime" law raised the age of consent from 14 to 16 while enforcing mandatory sentences for "gun crime" convictions that target black and South Asian youth. In the bourgeoisie's eyes, teenagers are too young for sex, but not too young to be tried, sentenced and jailed as adults. Underlining both their thoroughgoing support for racist Canadian capitalism and the moral priggery that typifies these social democrats, the New Democratic Party backed the Tories' reactionary law.

In Toronto, cop repression has been sharply ramped up under social-democratic mayor David Miller. In black and Asian neighbourhoods like Jane and Finch, where unemployment and poverty are rampant, the cops act as an occupying force, harassing and detaining youth at will. Meanwhile, armed cops patrol the corridors of 50 Toronto high schools. In October, one of these cops was caught on camera brutally beating a black student inside Northern Secondary School, sparking angry protest. Many minority parents have begun to speak out against cops in the schools.

For a Revolutionary Workers Party, Tribune of the Oppressed

The working class must come to the defense of all victims of capitalist state repression, including teachers rounded up under anti-sex laws and students victimized by cop terror. Instead, in a 2005 policy document, the bureaucracy that runs the OSSTF high school teachers union actually encouraged the government to put cops in schools.

A class-struggle leadership of the unions would make a concerted effort to break the climate of fear, shame and stigma that surrounds teachers caught in the state's puritanical web. This battle must include combating the pernicious religious moralism that permeates teachers colleges and the school system. At the University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education a special "Catholic Teacher Education Program" trains hundreds of future teachers in the fine art of preaching anti-scientific "Gospel Values." Such "values" include church doctrines that ban birth control and treat abortion as murder. Religious obscurantism serves to oppress women by preventing them from exercising control over their own fertility. We are for free abortion on demand! We call for an end to publicly funded Catholic schools and demand one secular school system.

The Spartacus Youth Clubs seek to train the future cadre of the Leninist vanguard party that alone can lead the working class in struggle to overthrow racist, capitalist rule. A workers state will enforce full democratic rights for gays and begin the task of liberating women from the oppressive confines of the family. Only world socialist revolution will lay the material basis to replace the institution of the family and open the door to an egalitarian future. In fighting to expose the material underpinnings of religious backwardness in bourgeois society, we look forward to the world described by Friedrich Engels in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, a world where people "will care precious little what anybody today thinks they ought to do; they will make their own practice and their corresponding public opinion about the practice of each individual—and that will be the end of it."■

ISO Debates Pro-Capitalist Hunter Economics Club...and Loses

Eyewitness Report from the Slops of the Post-Soviet Trough

The December 3 event was billed as "Capitalism vs. Socialism: The Great Debate at Hunter College"—talk about false advertising! It featured economics professor Mark Weinstock and the International Socialist Organization's Petrino DiLeo as well as three student panelists from the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and three from the Hunter College Economics Club. The ISO undoubtedly lost the debate. It was no small feat for "socialists" to go down in flames at a debate during the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression when faced with arguments like "The U.S. is one of the most equal countries in the world!" and "Anyone sitting here can be a capitalist!" The ISO's pathetic performance was a real indication of the deep historical trough following the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union.

The word "Obama" did not escape the ISO's lips once. Yet they complained that this government—whose CEO they toasted in Harlem on his election!—is bought and paid for by Wall Street. They ludicrously cited capitalist France and Canada as models of how to run the multi-billion dollar health care industry "for people, not profits." They professed their deepest desire to see our tax money go to health care, not to the military. One ISO speaker ever so delicately suggested, "there is already something very strange about a system" that opens the borders for corporations to plunder poor countries while restricting immigration for working people. For the ISO, defending "socialism" amounts to acting like "responsible" advisers with modest suggestions on how to reform the bankrupt capitalist system. As if the capitalist rulers were moved by anything but defending their rule and profits!

BBC

Monty Python's "Upper Class Twit of the Year" race or "Capitalism vs. Socialism" debate at Hunter College?

The ISO tried to motivate "socialism" by whining about light bulbs and planned obsolescence. They ludicrously debated whether a baby is generous or greedy before being socialized—talk about infantile disorders! In a scene strangely reminiscent of Monty Python's "Upper Class Twit of the Year" race, the Economics Club student panelists ran circles around the ISO, while ISO members protested their concern for humanity in ever-shriller tones. When Professor Weinstock baited the ISO that people who are really concerned about making change become "social entrepreneurs" in non-profits and don't just sit around and talk, the ISO pleaded that they run around at a lot of protests!

In vain the ISO sought convergence with the Economics Club's pro-capitalist toadies by disavowing the Soviet Union not once but three times, taking the side of "democratic" U.S. imperialism against the former degenerated workers state. "That had nothing to do with socialism...Stalin's brutal totalitarian dictatorship...mass slaughter...work camps...," and so on. (They dodged Professor Weinstock's foam-flecked denunciations of Cuba entirely.) But Weinstock would hear nothing of it, growling that you can't deny what socialism meant in the USSR, China and Cuba!

He could have added North Korea and Vietnam, which are also not capitalist. The October 1917 Russian Revolution was a beacon of hope for workers and the oppressed around the world. But the Soviet Union never achieved socialism: Marxists understand that socialism is based on a higher level of economic development than the most advanced capitalism and cannot be achieved in one impoverished, isolated country. Instead, the failure of the Russian Revolution to be extended internationally and the consequent restabilization of world capitalism gave rise to a privileged, parasitic caste atop the Soviet workers state. Despite its degeneration under the anti-revolutionary bureaucratic caste represented by J. V. Stalin, until the capitalist counterrevolution of 1991-92 the Soviet Union remained a workers state with a planned, collectivized economy far superior to capitalist Russia.

We Marxists fought to defend the gains of the Russian Revolution, to extend the revolution internationally, and for workers political revolution to sweep away the Stalinist bureaucracy. In contrast, the ISO called the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union—which was a devastating defeat for working people and

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More on Obama's War in Afghanistan

The following letter from the New York Spartacus Youth Club appeared in the Hunter College *Envoy* (25 November-8 December 2009) in response to an article in which staff writer Sean McMahon, who had mistakenly believed himself to be a Marxist when he picked up a copy of *Workers Vanguard* on campus, expressed his dismay that we oppose both the occupation of Afghanistan and imperialist top cop Barack Obama. As McMahon wrote, "I got the impression that to the *Vanguard*, there was not only no honeymoon period between them and President Obama, but there may not have even been a courtship." Good! We're glad we were able to set him straight on some basic Marxism.

* * *

It's not every day that one can find such forthright admiration for the U.S. imperialist occupation of Afghanistan from a self-described "lefty" as expressed in Sean McMahon's article "Obama's War? No, America's Responsibility" (October 14-27 [2009]). McMahon was responding to the Spartacist League's article in *Workers Vanguard*, "Down With Obama's War in Afghanistan" [*WV* No. 942, 11 September 2009] which calls for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S./NATO forces from Afghanistan and Iraq. McMahon argues that the United States has the "determination" to "see to it that Afghanistan becomes, if not a thriving democracy, at least a stable country not ruled by religious fanatics...." In fact, we understand that the *only* "determination" the U.S. has in the strategic region of Central Asia is to advance its imperialist interests. The corrupt regime that the U.S. supports today is based on a coalition of former *mujahedin* militias, and the 2004 constitution effectively enshrines Islamic fundamentalist *sharia* law.

McMahon bemoans that "the United States left Afghanistan to its own devices after training the mujahideen to fight the Red Army in the 1980's...." What actually happened? The Soviet Union in 1979 sent 100,000 troops in order to stem a U.S.-trained *mujahedin* insurgency against the left-nationalist, pro-Soviet government. We proudly declared, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan! Extend social gains of October Revolution to Afghan peoples!" This expressed our recognition that, despite its degeneration under a Stalinist bureaucratic caste, the Soviet Union remained a workers state, where capitalism had been overthrown. The Soviet Union embodied the historic gains of the October 1917 Russian workers revolution, not least for women. The intervention of the USSR on behalf of the modernizing secular government brought immense social progress. The amount of women in the workforce increased 50-fold, with half of all university students being women. The Afghan government also began mass literacy campaigns and provided medical care. But the Soviet forces pulled out from Afghanistan in early 1989 in an attempt to placate the U.S. ruling class. We bitterly denounced this betrayal which paved the way for a bloody onslaught against the Afghan peoples. The restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union in 1991-92 was a historic defeat for the world's working class and the oppressed.

Baldev/Sygma

Afghan women's militia volunteers took up arms against CIA-backed Islamic cutthroats. Red Army intervention opened prospect of social emancipation for women.

It's no surprise that McMahon confuses himself for a "Marxist" on the basis of some online Facebook poll, considering that most fake-left groups, including the misnamed International Socialist Organization, sided with the U.S. imperialists and their reactionary CIA-funded *mujahedin*, who threw acid in the faces of young women learning to read. More recently, just weeks before Obama announced he was sending 17,000 more troops to Afghanistan, the ISO gushed that Obama's election was "a reason to believe that change *is* possible" (*Socialist Worker* online, 21 January [2009]), building illusions once again in U.S. imperialism. The Democrats and the Republicans are the parties of the American capitalist class. Obama has worked tirelessly to break the back of the United Auto Workers union while giving *billions* to the banks. His "timetable" for the withdrawal of troops from Iraq is essentially the same as Bush's, and since his election, anti-immigrant roundups have increased along with Predator missile strikes in Pakistan.

"Imperialistic" does not describe "certain facets of American foreign policy," as McMahon writes. Imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism. The blood-soaked U.S. imperialists have wreaked untold misery the world over. Capitalism is based on the exploitation of the working class and, in this epoch of its decay, wars that divide and redivide the world's markets. The only possibility of a future free of wars, misery and want rests in the victory of international socialist revolution. We in the Spartacus Youth Club, the youth auxiliary of the Spartacist League, seek to build a revolutionary workers party that can lead the struggle to sweep away this rotten system for good. ■

Down With Chauvinist Compulsory English Policy!

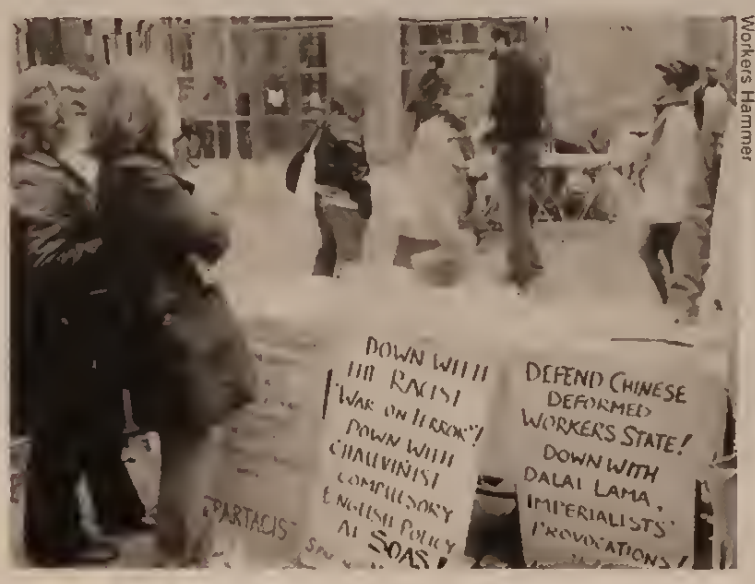
Spartacist Club Banned at London Campus

We reprint the following article from Workers Hammer *No. 209 (Winter 2009-2010), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain.*

The British state's "war on terror" is the domestic face of the bloody imperialist occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. At universities, this is reflected in government guidelines for "tackling violent extremism," which place students and immigrant workers squarely in the crosshairs of police repression. Exactly what this means was seen on 8 April 2009 when police arrested eleven Asian men, mainly students, on bogus "terrorist" charges. When the cops finally admitted they had no evidence and released the men two weeks later without charges, ten of them—all Pakistani nationals—were incarcerated by the UK Border Agency. Eight were forced to leave the country while two remain in jail fighting deportation.

A 4 December 2009 *Guardian* article titled "Terror Arrest Students Fight to Clear Their Names" describes how "men in combat uniforms grabbed Rizwan Sharif outside a Liverpool university last April, pointing a gun at his head." Another of those arrested, 25-year-old business student Janas Khan, told the *Guardian* his life had been ruined by the experience, commenting: "The whole thing is rubbish. There was no bomb factory, no link to al-Qaida and they know it."

It is in the vital interests of students, lecturers and campus workers to oppose the "war on terror" and anti-immigrant witch hunts on campuses. Under Labour's draconian new immigration rules, universities and teachers are compelled to act as auxiliaries of the immigration police by monitoring foreign students and reporting anything "suspicious" to the state. This has rightly outraged many lecturers. But while the lecturers union UCU states that it is "absolutely opposed to this legislation," it urges its members to co-operate, stating that: "these duties are part of a legal obligation on universities" and "the union's protection of members cannot extend to endorsing a breach of the law relating to PBS [points-based system] or defending members who do so" ("Points-based Immigration," UCU briefing paper, February 2009).



Workers Hammer

Spartacists set up table in defiance of student union bureaucrats at London's School of Oriental and African Studies, October 2009.

Meanwhile, on 12 June 2009, immigrant cleaners at London's School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) employed by the contractor ISS were called to an "emergency meeting" and set upon by 40 immigration cops who were hiding in the room with the complicity of SOAS management. Nine cleaners were detained, most of whom were subsequently deported. This was a blatant attack on this workforce which had just won union recognition and the London Living Wage after going on strike. The Spartacist League protested this vicious raid and called for full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

It is scandalous that the student union bureaucracy, including the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), has long been colluding with the university administration to enforce a chauvinist compulsory English policy on student societies' literature that fits squarely in the framework of the government's 2006 "extremism" guidelines, targeting in particular Islamic societies. At the September 2006 freshers fair, student union bureaucrats led by then-prominent SWP spokesman Clare Solomon, imposed a rule that "all publicity must be in English," ludicrously passing this off as part of its "equal opportunities policy." This was subsequently amended to state that all literature must have a direct English translation. Ever since, we have campaigned against this attempt at censorship at interventions into campus events and at regular sales of our literature (including in Arabic, Chinese, Turkish, Tagalog and other languages).

Escalating this chauvinist campaign, a 25 August 2009 email from Ben Sellers, current SOAS vice president for sports and societies, indicated the Spartacus Youth Group would not be allowed a stall at the 2009 freshers fair unless we agreed to censor our foreign-language literature. This is somewhat ironic at SOAS which boasts of being a "guardian of specialised knowledge in languages," offering "an unparalleled range of non-European languages" (soas.ac.uk)! As the SYG's email reply to the student union made clear:

> "We oppose this policy as a matter of political principle because it discriminates against foreign students and is a tool for enforcing the capitalist state's racist 'War on Terror' on campus. This primarily targets Muslim students but is ultimately aimed at immigrants, workers and leftists such as ourselves. Therefore, we cannot and will not censor our foreign language literature.
>
> "We believe that all students and students societies should be free to distribute literature in any language they wish and to express any political opinions that they choose to, including our opposition as revolutionary internationalist socialists to this chauvinist rule."

When the SYG set up a table outside the freshers fair making clear our opposition to racism and chauvinism, including the foreign-language gag at SOAS, it proved too much for the student union bureaucrats. A 20 October 2009 email from Ben Sellers preached: "This is not acceptable behaviour for the officers of a society, and as such I will not be accepting society paperwork from the Spartacus Youth Group for the coming academic year." This ban on our communist society is outrageous and students and workers on the campus have an interest in opposing this censorship. As for us, we will continue to oppose the "war on terror" witch hunt and demand: ***Down with the chauvinist compulsory English policy for student societies at SOAS!*** ■

ISO Debates...

(continued from page 5)

the oppressed around the world—"a step sideways" (see "The Bankruptcy of 'New Class Theories'," *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 55, Autumn 1999).

A Spartacus Youth Club speaker said from the floor:

> "We are communists, socialists—we use the two terms interchangeably. There's no difference between the two. Rather than a debate on capitalism versus socialism, this is more like a debate on capitalism versus warm and fuzzy reformed capitalism. [To the ISO:] You have actually taken your sub-reformist speech a peg lower than usual. I'm not going to address the pro-capitalists, I'm going to address the people in the audience who are on the side of the working class against the capitalist class. Now, the Spartacist League is in favor of building a workers party to fight for the dictatorship of the working class. Democracy is not a classless warm and fuzzy thing. It's which class rules—democracy for the working class or democracy for the capitalist class?
>
> "I want to touch on what the ISO, these State Department socialists, said: that the Soviet Union and China have nothing to do with socialism. The fact is, they spit on every country that has managed to overthrow capitalism in history. They have sided with the camp of U.S. imperialism against the Soviet Union, against China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam."

At this point a huge commotion ensued at the front of the room. The ISO managed to form a successful "united front" with the advocates of capitalism—against the communists. Amid the anti-free-speech petty bureaucrats' most unoriginal cries of "What's your question?" the SYC speaker pointed to the ISO panelists and said, "The answer they have is abject servility to the class enemy. So I don't have a question for them. What I'm trying to give is answers here." Predictably, the savants on both sides of the panel howled that they did not want the Spartacists' answers.

Our speaker continued: "Now, the ISO, what they don't talk about is Obama. Just to wrap it up I want to talk about Obama, because nobody here talks about Obama. Obama is the capitalist class enemy." Both sides of the panel cried that they did not want to hear about Obama. Our speaker said to the students in the audience, "The ISO are cheerleaders for Barack Obama. You need to break with the Democrats and the Republicans and fight for a workers party that fights for socialist revolution. Being a cheerleader for the Democrats, trying to reform capitalism, will not work."

The ISO could not respond to our

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Getty

Homeless people scavenge for food in garbage outside Moscow, 2003.

Letters

MLK Did Not Lead 1966 March in Cicero

16 January 2010

Dear *Young Spartacus*,

It is no accident that there is a widespread myth that Martin Luther King led a civil rights march into Cicero in 1966 (cf., "Corrections," *WV* No. 945, 23 October 2009). That myth has been deliberately propagated.

One source is a biography of King posted on the Web site of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute at Stanford University. The biographical article states: "King was stoned by angry whites in the Chicago suburb of Cicero when he led a march against racial discrimination in housing." The institute's director is Clayborne Carson, author of a number of works on King, as well as *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (1981). Another influential source of the myth is the award-winning 2004 documentary film *Citizen King*, which was produced, directed and written by Orlando Bagwell and W. Noland Walker.

It is difficult to imagine that those filmmakers—and the King scholar Carson—were unaware of the fact that King did not support the 4 September 1966 civil rights march in Cicero. In fact, all three worked on the award-winning public television documentary series *Eyes on the Prize*, one of the many works that have accurately recounted that history. Carson served as senior advisor to *Eyes on the Prize*, and Bagwell produced a number of episodes in the series. Walker served as production assistant on the episode that deals with King's Chicago campaign, *Two Societies: 1965-1968* (1990).

Two Societies accurately presents dramatic footage of several protest marches in late July and early August into Gage Park and other all-white enclaves in Chicago's Southwest Side, in which civil rights protesters were confronted by mohs of white racists. *Two Societies* then recounts King's signing of an accord with Chicago mayor Richard Daley, after which, as the film's narrator states, King "agreed to stop the marches, including the march into Cicero." The film presents an interview with Robert Lucas, who was the leader of Chicago CORE. Lucas recounts that King called him shortly before the Cicero march to ask that he call it off. This is followed by footage of courageous civil rights demonstrators braving a gauntlet of rioting racists in Cicero.

In contrast, *Citizen King* goes to considerable lengths to create the false impression that King led the march in Cicero. This section of *Citizen King* is introduced by shots of street scenes in Cicero, starting with a close-up of a "Welcome to Cicero" street sign. The voice-over states: "Dr. King decided that he was going to march in Cicero." The film then cuts to what are supposedly scenes of the Cicero march. In fact, what *Citizen King* shows are brief snippets from the actual Cicero march spliced into a lengthy pastiche of scenes from the protests in late July and early August, all apparently showing the Cicero march. We see King emerging from his car, supposedly to join the Cicero demonstration; actually, it was the 5 August protest in Marquette Park. We see cars being overturned and burned; this actually happened following the 31 July demonstration in Gage Park. In the middle of this deceptive montage, *Citizen King* cuts to an interview with a black former Chicago policeman, who declares, "One guy hit King with a brick in the Cicero march, and gashed him in the head." This is followed by a film shot of King holding his head after being hit. However, that attack on King took place not in Cicero but at the 5 August protest in Marquette Park. Finally, driving home the false impression that all of these protest scenes took place in Cicero, the filmmakers follow them with an excerpt from an interview with King in which he explains the importance of fighting for integration in places like Cicero.

In fact, much of the footage deceptively presented in *Citizen King* as showing the Cicero march was used in the earlier *Eyes on the Prize* episode, *Two Societies*, where it was correctly identified as showing the earlier protests.

The obvious effect is to blot out the memory of the march that actually *did* take place in Cicero. King called off the planned march into Cicero after signing a bogus "open-housing" agreement with Daley, that the mayor, the bankers and the realtors had no intention of implementing. Militants of CORE and others maintained the Cicero protest, marching under a hail of rocks and bottles. The fact is that the *real* Cicero march underlined the ignominious collapse of King's Chicago campaign against housing discrimination. Even the biographical article cited above acknowledges that King's Chicago campaign "resulted in no significant gains."

PBS

Civil rights militants march in Cicero, Illinois, 1966, despite King's attempts to call it off.

It was in Chicago that the liberal premises of the civil rights movement came most clearly into explosive collision with economic and social reality. Blacks in Northern ghettos already had the formal rights won by the civil rights movement in the South—"equality under the law" and "one man, one vote"—but that did not prevent them from being forced to live as second-class citizens. As was made abundantly clear in Chicago, King and the rest of the liberal civil rights leadership had no program to fight the causes of racial discrimination, which are deeply rooted in the economic and social structure of capitalist society. The myth that King led the march in Cicero helps to obscure that fact.

Comradely,
Bruce André

On California Campus Protests

25 January 2010

Dear Editor,

The otherwise fine California budget cuts article in the current *WV/Young Spartacus* ["Protests Against Education Cuts and Fee Hikes Sweep California"] No. 950, 15 January) contains a political misstatement. After pointing out that workers have the social power that students do not have, the article states:

> "Students must therefore ally with the working class, not the other way around."

The above statement implies that the workers have no need to ally with protesting students since they have no social power. The relation of workers to protesting students is contextual and not categorical precisely because students represent a sometimes volatile petty-bourgeois layer. In the last days of the Weimar Republic a mobilized working class needed to *crush* a student movement that in its overwhelming majority were fascist shock troops. But in *today's context*, when students and labor are protesting against the racist state government and its draconian cuts, the second part of the above statement is wrong.

In early 20th century Russia, students were overwhelmingly children of the privileged elite. Nevertheless, though their protests were over purely academic issues, when 183 student activists were drafted into the army, Lenin demanded:

> "All conscious elements among all strata of the people must take up this challenge, if they do not desire to fall to the level of dumb slaves bearing their insults in silence. At the head of these conscious elements stand the advanced workers and the Social-Democratic organisations inseparably linked with them. The working class constantly suffers immeasurably greater injuries and insults from the police lawlessness with which the students have now come into such sharp conflict. The working class has already begun the struggle for its emancipation. It must remember that this great struggle imposes great obligations upon it, that it cannot emancipate itself without emancipating the whole people from despotism, that it is its duty first and foremost to respond to every political protest and render every support to that protest."
>
> —"The Drafting of 183 Students into the Army" (February 1901)

Lenin mandated that the workers' vanguard be a "Tribune of the People," itself a motivating force for persuading students to ally with the proletariat.

With best comradely regards,
Reuben S.

speaker. Just two days prior to the debate, Obama had announced he would send 30,000 more troops for the imperialist slaughter in Afghanistan. After nearly eleven months of celebratory, post-inaugural drunken stupor, the ISO had woken up with a tremendous hangover to crash out an editorial headlined, "It's Obama's War Now" (*Socialist Worker* online, 2 December 2009). It came nearly a year late, but they finally managed to choke out the words (and it wasn't even posed as a question).

The ISO's editorial hypocritically chides the imperialists for "historical amnesia about the bitter fruits of U.S. policy in Afghanistan since the 1970s." But the ISO's feigned amnesia about who *they* were sleeping with at the time did not play so well at the Hunter debate. After our intervention, we sold copies of our article "Charlie Wilson's War Was the ISO's War" (*WV* No. 921, 26 September 2008), informing students that the ISO championed the CIA-backed *mujahedin* in Afghanistan as freedom fighters, while we supported the Soviet Army's efforts to crush these woman-hating butchers and opposed the U.S. imperialists' proxy war against the Soviet degenerated workers state.

The ISO easily lost the debate because their politics are premised on fighting for the reformist "improvement" of imperialism. The anti-communist advocates of capitalism easily triumphed over the anti-communist reformist "socialists" because the former could more effectively defend the camp in which both sides actually reside. We spent about three hours at this debate in what might be described as the slops of the post-Soviet historical trough—not our idea of an enjoyable way to spend the evening. But we stuck it out because we didn't want students fed up with this depraved capitalist system to think that the ISO's masquerade has anything to do with socialism. ■

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Death Penalty...

(continued from page 1)

the U.S. is rooted in the origins of American capitalism, which was built on the backs of black slaves. Under the Slave Codes, slaves were killed with impunity for "crimes" ranging from insolence toward whites to rebellion against the slave masters. It took a bloody Civil War to smash slavery. Only after that revolutionary victory were the freed black slaves recognized as persons, with full rights as citizens. In the ensuing period of Radical Reconstruction, the most democratic period in American history, more blacks per capita held political office than at any other time. But the promise of freedom for which 200,000 black troops fought so courageously was betrayed by the Northern capitalists.

All remaining Union troops were withdrawn from the South by 1877, and shortly thereafter a rigid system of legal segregation called Jim Crow was imposed and maintained by Klan terror and police-state repression. At the heart of the Jim Crow system was the lynch mob, whose purpose was to enforce the subjugation of black people through terror and murder. Although the number of those so hideously put to death will never be known, the Tuskegee Institute estimates that nearly 5,000 lynchings took place between 1882 and 1968. By the 1930s, extralegal lynchings were increasingly supplanted by legal lynching. From 1930 to 1967, more than two-thirds of those executed were black.

In an article titled "Black Man's Burden: Race and the Death Penalty in America" (*Oregon Law Review*, Spring 2002), Charles Ogletree rightly argued that "the racially disproportionate application of the death penalty can be seen as being in historical continuity with the long and sordid history of lynching in this country." Pointing to the fact that the Southern states that account for more than 90 percent of all executions today significantly overlap with those with the greatest number of lynchings and other extralegal terror during the Jim Crow period, he concluded: "Given the many similarities between the illegal but often officially sanctioned practice of lynching, and the current imposition of the death penalty, it seems at times that the only difference between lynching and capital punishment is the gloss of legality and procedural regularity that the latter enjoys."

In 1967 executions were put on hold; five years later the Supreme Court ruled that the death penalty was "wanton and freakish" and ordered states to rewrite their laws. This ruling came in the context of the tumultuous civil rights struggles, growing mass protests against U.S. imperialism's dirty and losing war against the Vietnamese workers and peasants and, in 1970, a mounting strike wave. On the world stage, the images of black protesters demanding basic equality being viciously attacked by racist cops and mobs were an embarrassment to U.S. imperialism and its posturing as the champion of "democracy" in the Cold War, particularly in competition with the Soviet Union in the Third World. In this context, America's rulers judged that it was time to refurbish their much-tarnished "land of liberty" credentials.

Johnson Family

Indymedia

Video captured cold-blooded execution of Oscar Grant (inset) by BART cop in Oakland, 1 January 2009.

But this was a brief and unusual moment in U.S. history, a period when the capitalist rulers were trying to contain, co-opt and eventually destroy the mass civil rights movement and the burgeoning radicalization centered on the Vietnam War. And they succeeded. After the 1973 U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam, the antiwar movement disappeared. The civil rights movement, whose leaders banked on the courts and the Democratic Party for redress, was broken when it confronted the vicious segregation of blacks in Northern ghettos, which was based not on Jim Crow law but on the reality of American capitalism. Most of the more radical black militants who opposed the policies of the civil rights leaders were either cut down by the FBI's COINTELPRO operation or co-opted into the Democratic Party.

By 1976, when the death penalty was reinstated, the winds of reaction against 1960s liberalism and particularly black rights were blowing hot. Busing for school integration was defeated through a combination of racist mobs in the streets and liberals in Congress. The nomination of "born again" Baptist Jimmy Carter to head the Democratic Party ticket in the 1976 elections was not accidental—Carter openly proclaimed the virtues of "ethnic purity." A year later, the ten-year moratorium on the death penalty ended with the execution of Gary Gilmore. The racist "war on crime," which was kicked off in the 1970s by Republican Richard Nixon, was augmented in the 1980s by the "war on drugs" under Ronald Reagan, with the support of leading black Democratic spokesmen such as Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton. This racist war led to a massive increase in black incarceration, with the U.S. now housing 2.3 million prisoners, the largest prison population in the world. One of every three black males born today can expect time in jail.

At the same time, as industry was being decimated in the late 1970s and '80s, the prison population grew by a million—one place for every job lost on the assembly line. The lives of the majority of the black population, which once supplied a "reserve army of labor" for American capitalism, were now deemed by the rulers to be irrelevant to production for profit, while social programs seen as benefiting the ghetto and barrio poor were slashed, culminating in Democratic Party president Bill Clinton ending "welfare as we know it" in 1996.

That same year, Bill Clinton gave a major boost to the death penalty. His Anti-terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act gutted the *habeas corpus* right of state prisoners to have federal courts review their convictions and vastly expanded the federal death penalty, giving a green light to the execution machinery to go full speed ahead. And, indeed, the assembly line of death was kicked into high gear, reaching a high of 98 executions in 1999.

Written in this history, in the negative, is the fundamental truth of Karl Marx's statement at the time of the Civil War: "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded." Fomenting racial and ethnic hatreds has long served America's capitalist rulers in ratcheting up the exploitation of the working class as a whole, keeping the workers divided and obscuring the fundamental class nature of the capitalist system of exploitation. Writing off the lives of the ghetto poor as worthless is aimed at exalting those who will work at any wages and under any conditions. The results can be seen in the trail of broken unions, the slashing of wages, the increasing speedup and the general deterioration of living conditions for most working people. In all this, the rulers have been ably assisted by the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucrats, whose policies of class peace and promotion of the capitalist Democratic Party as a "friend of labor" have sapped the fighting strength of the unions.

The death penalty stands at the pinnacle of the American capitalist state's arsenal of repression. While the face of death row may now be mainly black and Latino, fighters for labor's cause have also been targeted for death by the capitalist state: the Haymarket anarchists, abolitionists and labor organizers who fought for the eight-hour day, in 1877; IWW organizer Joe Hill in 1915; anarchist workers Sacco and Vanzetti in 1927. This does not include the hundreds of working-class fighters who have died at the hands of the strikebreaking cops and scabs. But it was out of such struggles that the industrial unions in this country were forged in the 1930s, bringing into their ranks as militant fighters masses of black workers. Break-

Korotzer/Next Left Notes

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition at NAACP convention in New York City, July 2009. Reformists crawl to Commander-in-Chief of U.S. imperialism and his top cop, Attorney General Eric Holder.

Spartacist/Labor Black League

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Update: Supreme Court of Death Rules Against Mumia Abu-Jamal

Qian Xuesen...

(continued from page 2)

a utopian attempt to catapult China to the level of an advanced industrial society through the intense exertion of mainly peasant labor relying on primitive technology, Qian used his scientific credentials to assert in magazine articles that agricultural output could be increased by a factor of 20 using only water conservation, manure and labor. Thus he bears a share of responsibility for the immense famine that followed the collapse of the "Great Leap."

Qian made it through the intrabureaucratic Cultural Revolution virtually unscathed, as those working on highly sensitive military projects were largely shielded by their isolation and value to the regime. With his prominent position in the CCP hierarchy, he was very outspoken in support of the crushing of the 1989 Tiananmen upheaval, an incipient proletarian political revolution against bureaucratic misrule.

The contradictions inherent in Stalinist rule were seen in Qian's own views. Though he was a brilliant scientist, his intense nationalism led him to promote some bizarre pseudoscience (as did Mao and others in the bureaucracy), urging the government to devote more resources to acupuncture, the *qigong* "art of healing" and the study of ESP. In the late 1990s, having originally promoted the Falun Gong cult, Beijing cracked down on this anti-Communist outfit, which pushes *qigong* to get popular support for its aim of fomenting capitalist counterrevolution and spews vile racism and anti-woman, anti-gay bigotry.

The most glaring contradiction was in the issue of China's military defense, which is undermined by the Stalinists' pursuit of "socialism in one country," whose corollary is the quest for accommodation with imperialism and opposition to the struggle for world socialist revolution. This was graphically displayed by the Sino-Soviet split in the 1960s, when the Moscow and Beijing bureaucracies fell out in pursuit of their own nationally defined interests. Where the Kremlin criminally backed capitalist India in its border war with China in 1962, Mao's regime went on to forge an alliance with the U.S. against the Soviet Union in the 1970s and '80s. Thus the CCP contributed to the final undoing of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92, a historic defeat for the world's proletariat and oppressed masses that removed the only significant military counterweight to U.S. imperialism.

Basic Books photos

Qian Xuesen in a group photo at Shuangchengzi missile test site in October 1960, before launching of R-2 rocket. Right: Chinese intermediate-range ballistic missile.

The imperialist bourgeoisie, which has never reconciled itself to "losing" China, pursues a multifaceted strategy for capitalist restoration: economic penetration via Beijing's "socialist market economy," promotion of counterrevolutionary forces like the Dalai Lama, and direct military pressure, as seen, for example, in U.S. arms sales to Taiwan. The struggle for a world socialist order crucially includes the unconditional military defense of the remaining deformed workers states—China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba—against imperialist attack and domestic counterrevolution. Thus we support the development of the Chinese and North Korean nuclear arsenals. At the same time, we fight for proletarian political revolutions to sweep away the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies and replace them with regimes of workers democracy committed to proletarian internationalism.

As communists fighting in the belly of the U.S. imperialist beast, we hold a place of honor for Qian Xuesen and the many other scientists and workers who, under extremely difficult conditions, made heroic efforts to build China's nuclear capacity. In the midst of the Sino-Soviet split, we underscored the historic importance of this development, writing in "Bureaucracy and Revolution in Moscow and Peking" (*Spartacist* No. 3, January-February 1965):

> "China's development of the A-bomb must be greeted by all revolutionary Marxists as a welcome strengthening of Chinese defenses at a time when the Chinese Revolution is not only being aggressively threatened by U.S. imperialism but when it is also being systematically betrayed by the Soviet bureaucracy in the search for 'peaceful coexistence.' However, the main point is that every increase in the ability of the Chinese to hold the U.S. at bay militarily is an increase in time to prepare the proletarian revolution—above all in *America*—the only final safeguard to all gains thus far made by the international working class."■

---

ing the chains forged by the trade-union misleaders that have shackled the working class to the class enemy means fighting to build a new class-struggle leadership. It will be out of hard-fought class battles that the vital instrument for getting rid of this decaying system of exploitation, racial oppression and death will be forged—a multiracial workers party to lead the fight for a socialist America. Such a party must be rooted in the understanding that the fight for black freedom is central to the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat.

Abolish the Death Penalty Everywhere!

More than 150 years ago, Karl Marx attacked the London *Times* for upholding capital punishment as a necessary defense of "civilization":

> "It would be very difficult, if not altogether impossible, to establish any principle upon which the justice or expediency of capital punishment could be founded, in a society glorying in its civilization. Punishment in general has been defended as a means either of ameliorating or of intimidating. Now what right have you to punish me for the amelioration or intimidation of others?... Now, what a state of society is that, which knows of no better instrument for its own defense than the hangman, and which proclaims through the 'leading journal of the world' its own brutality as eternal law?"
>
> —"Capital Punishment" (January 1853)

When capital punishment was reintroduced in the U.S., amid an anti-crime hysteria, we noted in "Abolish the Death Penalty" (*WV* No. 117, 9 July 1976): "The Marxist attitude toward crime and punishment is that we are against it.... Socialists do not proceed from the standpoint of punishing the offenders. Such a vindictive penal attitude is fundamentally a religious rather than a materialist conception of social relations." Marxists fight for the creation of an international socialist society based on material abundance. Only then will the material conditions exist for the eradication of crime—which is born of deprivation and otherwise is a small-time reflection of the theft and terror on which capitalism is based—and for eradication of the need for a repressive state apparatus. Such a society cannot come into being without the victory of socialist revolutions internationally, especially in the advanced capitalist countries.

Today, the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state leads the world in executions. This is one of the hideous expressions of Stalinist rule—not only in China but also in North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba—which is based on the reactionary utopia of building "socialism in one country"—i.e., opposition to the struggle for international socialist revolution. A brittle caste that parasitically sits atop the workers state, the Stalinist bureaucracy uses the death penalty and other forms of repression to maintain social order. We fight for the unconditional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state. But the fact that 1,700 human lives were snuffed out through capital punishment last year in China only underlines the need for a proletarian political revolution to overthrow the ruling bureaucracy and establish working-class soviet democracy, based on the program of proletarian revolutionary internationalism.

The "Budget" of Crime and Punishment

In the U.S., public support for the death penalty has been shaken, falling from a high of 80 percent in 1994 to 65 percent today. States like New Jersey and, more recently, New Mexico have abolished the death penalty, as juries have become increasingly reluctant to impose a death sentence. Here the calculus of state-sanctioned killing runs up against the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. A 2009 year-end report by the Death Penalty Information Center noted: "The costs of the death penalty became an increasingly important issue as states faced severe budget deficits. High expenses with no measurable benefit were frequently cited in legislative debates about the death penalty." The report also cited the increasing introduction of life-without-parole sentences—which the *Dallas Morning News* gleefully, and correctly, called "death by prison"—as a central factor in the decline of death sentences to their lowest in a decade.

Pointing to New Mexico Democratic Party governor Bill Richardson's statement that cost of the death penalty was "a valid reason" for its repeal, an article by the reformist Workers World Party (WWP) notes: "One way to save hundreds of millions every year is to end the very expensive and wasteful death penalty and use those millions for job programs, education and health care. Every cost study in the U.S. shows that the death penalty is far more costly than life in prison" (*Workers World*, 13 January). That WWP advises the capitalist rulers on reducing the overhead of state repression and death is simply one of the more outrageous expressions of "money for jobs, not prisons" reformism.

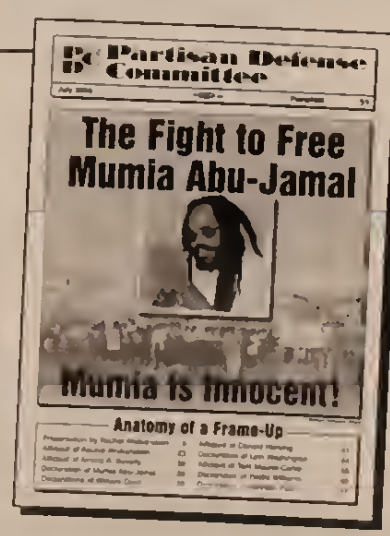
While the price of death at the hands of the state may be a factor in curtailing its present use, sectors of the bourgeoisie have also been screaming over the inordinate costs of the bloated prison system. Yet even in the context of a declining crime rate, and with no immediate prospect of upheavals in the inner cities, they continue to throw more people behind bars and keep them there. A recent article in the *New York Times* (30 January) noted that despite a New York State law liberalizing the release of old or sick inmates who are physically incapable of committing a violent crime, few have been let go even though each inmate costs the state $150,000 a year.

Nor do the rulers tinker lightly with their machinery of death. The *Workers World* article, titled "Death Penalty Changes Spur Optimism," points to the recent Supreme Court decision granting a new evidentiary hearing for Georgia death row prisoner Troy Davis. This was a real victory. Davis, a black man falsely accused of killing an off-duty cop, has three times come within hours of being executed despite the fact that seven of the nine witnesses who testified he was the killer have since recanted.

The sanctimonious declaration by Supreme Court Justice Paul Stevens that "the substantial risk of putting an innocent man to death clearly provides an adequate justification for holding an evidentiary hearing" may sound enlightened. But one need only look to the fact that a few months later the Court ruled against the appeal of Kevin Cooper despite overwhelming evidence of his innocence, including a 103-page statement by five judges in California's Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. This was quickly followed by the Supreme Court's move to have a death sentence reinstated against black political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Reformists like WWP seek to tinker with capitalism because they imbue this system of exploitation and oppression with inherent democracy and rationality. Marxists, whether on the question of the death penalty, life in prison or imprisonment in general, do not offer advice on how to administer the capitalist state. We are opposed to the bourgeoisie's entire machinery of repression, including the vast enhancement of repressive tools adopted under the "war on terror," which has been wholeheartedly embraced by the Obama White House. Following the first U.S. execution since 1967, we wrote in "State Butchers Gilmore" (*WV* No. 141, 21 January 1977):

> "The reinstitution of the death penalty is not just another legal argument lost before an increasingly reactionary Supreme Court. It is one among many proofs of the failure of capitalism in its death agony to fulfill its promise of a decent life.... Only the victorious proletarian revolution that overthrows the bourgeois state will abolish the death penalty for good and smash the prisons, in the course of rooting out the whole vicious cycle of crime, punishment and repression caused by capitalism."■



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IG...

(continued from page 3)

Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. In fact, in language similar to what we say regarding Haiti, the IG declared: "Revolutionary communists would certainly not stand in the way of troops actually providing aid or helping rescue survivors" ("New Orleans Death Trap: Thousands of Black Poor Left to Die," *Internationalist*, September 2005). As far as the IG is concerned, it's okay for U.S. military forces to provide aid to survivors of a natural disaster in the U.S., but not in the Third World.

Nor did the IG call for a workers revolt amid the devastation left in the wake of Katrina. Rather they took a page from Martin Luther King Jr. and called for a "march on Washington," fatuously declaiming: "The sight of thousands of unemployed homeless camped out on the ellipse and the mall in full view of Bush's White House and the Capitol, recalling the hunger marches of the early 1930s, would send shivers down the spine of the ruling class."

In its response to us, the IG dismisses out of hand our reference to Leon Trotsky's 1938 article, "Learn to Think,"

...and I expect they will," announced Governor Kathleen Blanco. Revolutionary communists would certainly not stand in the way of troops actually providing aid or helping rescue survivors. We support demands that decent facilities be opened ... the use of the survivors, which will be a major issue ...

IG's line on troops providing aid following Hurricane Katrina disaster. Non-U.S. residents need not apply.

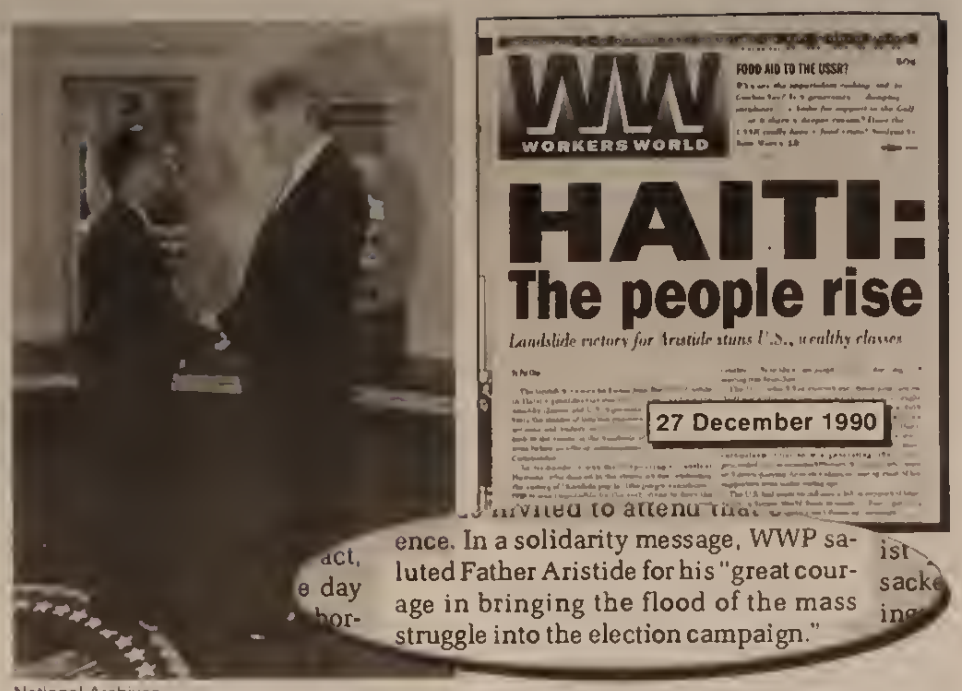
sneering: "*WV* throws in a quote from Leon Trotsky about not interfering with soldiers extinguishing a fire or rescuing drowning people during a flood. But Trotsky was explicitly talking of a 'national' army, not an imperialist invasion force." No. In fact, Trotsky was speaking here of not opposing on principle aid by an imperialist power to a national struggle in a semicolonial country. Trotsky's example that "the workers would not interfere with soldiers who are extinguishing a fire" was meant to be a self-evident statement aimed at urging woodenheaded simpletons to learn to think. This is clearly too profound for the opportunists of the IG. By the IG's logic, workers in the U.S. should be actively blocking any aid being shipped to Haiti by the U.S. military.

Adaptation to Third World populist nationalism is what lies behind the IG's conjuring up fantasies of proletarian revolution in Haiti. The IG shrieks: "Haiti has now joined a growing list of places where, according to the SL, there is no working class. It started off with Bolivia in 2005, then came Oaxaca in 2006, now Haiti in 2010." Well, it actually started much earlier than 2005. For example, in 1985, when current IG *líder máximo* Jan Norden was still editor of *Workers Vanguard*, we wrote in "South Africa: Razor's Edge" (*WV* No. 376, 5 April 1985):

> "South Africa is the one place in sub-Saharan Africa where there is the possibility for a workers state, because here the black population has been partially absorbed, at the bottom, into a modern industrialized society which can, based on the revolutionary reorganization of society, provide a decent life for its citizens."

This, precisely, is the rather elementary point for Marxists, that socialist revolution requires an industrial proletarian concentration that is sufficient for overturning capitalist class rule and establishing a workers state, the dictatorship of the proletariat. And if such is not the case? "Then the struggle for national liberation will produce only very partial results, results directed entirely against the working masses" (Leon Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution* [1930]). This is clearly evident in Haiti, where bitter and bloody popular uprisings in recent decades have led to nothing more than the installation of bourgeois-populist regimes ultimately backed by the might of U.S. imperialism.

The same applies in contemporary Bolivia, where measures by the imperialists and the domestic bourgeoisie, centrally the shutting down of the nationalized tin mines, led to the material devastation and atomization of the once powerful mining proletariat. The 2005 "Bolivian revolution" that the IG and other fake leftists enthused over was in fact a plebeian upheaval that resulted in the coming to power of bourgeois populist Evo Morales. And while Mexico does have a powerful industrial proletariat, the struggle in Oaxaca, one of the most economically backward parts of the country, was limited to teachers and sectors of the petty bourgeoisie such as students and peasants. We pointed out: "Although the struggle in Oaxaca could serve as a spark to ignite workers struggle, in itself it does not pose a 'revolutionary danger'," as the IG would have it ("Down With Bloody State of Siege in Oaxaca!" *WV* No. 880, 10 November 2006). At bottom the IG's glorification of the struggle in Oaxaca reflects its opportunist tailing of the popu-



National Archives

Reformist left embraced bourgeois populist Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Left: Aristide with Clinton in October 1994, after U.S. invasion reinstalled him as president of Haiti.

list milieu around the bourgeois Party of the Democratic Revolution.

The IG notwithstanding, the virtual absence of an industrial proletariat in Haiti, even before the devastation wreaked by the earthquake, is an obvious fact. Despite some modest economic development over the past few years, mainly centered on the garment industry, the financial trade magazine *TendersInfo* (5 October 2009) reported last fall: "The country now has 25 garment factories that export primarily to the United States and employ more than 24,000 workers, mostly women." By comparison, the garment industry in Bangladesh consists of 4,500 factories employing more than 2.5 million workers. Of course, Bangladesh is a much bigger country than Haiti. However, even as a proportion of GDP, the economic weight of the textile industry in Bangladesh is almost twice that in Haiti.

However, this does not mean that the masses in Haiti are consigned in perpetuity to imperialist oppression. Again, as we pointed out in our last article, there is a sizable Haitian proletariat in the diaspora, which went unmentioned in the IG's revolution-mongering around the earthquake. These workers can be a vital link to class struggle by the powerful North American proletariat. But to infuse the multiracial U.S. working class with an understanding of its role as the gravedigger of U.S. imperialism requires a political struggle against the pro-capitalist labor misleaders who chain the working class to its capitalist exploiters, centrally through political support to the Democratic Party.

And here is where the soft opportunist underbelly of the IG's Third World cheerleading is most exposed. At the time of the 2001 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, we called for military defense of that country while stressing the need for class struggle against the American ruling class at home. At the same time, we highlighted our call at the time of the Soviet intervention beginning in December 1979 to "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" In contrast, when the IG initiated a November 2001 Hunter College rally in New York to protest plans by the administration to drive out undocumented immigrant students, IG speakers did not so much as mention the Soviet intervention, for fear of offending those anti-Communist leftists at the rally who had been on the imperialist side against the Red Army in Afghanistan (see "IG Disappears Red Army Fight Against Islamic Reaction in Afghanistan," *WV* No. 772, 11 January 2002). While disappearing the one force capable of effecting a social revolution in Afghanistan, the IG idiotically raised the call for proletarian revolution in Afghanistan, where there is absolutely no industrial proletariat, writing in the *Internationalist* (September 2001): "Genuine communists defend semicolonial countries against imperialist attack as we fight for socialist revolution against their bourgeois and, in the case of Afghanistan, feudalistic leaders."

A few years later, the IG went a step further, amnestying the pro-capitalist International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) tops over the May Day 2008 antiwar West Coast port shutdown. That action was a powerful demonstration of the kind of working-class struggle needed against the imperialist occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. But, as we wrote, "the ILWU leadership politically undermined this action by channeling the ranks' anger at the Iraqi occupation and desire to defend their union into pro-Democratic Party 'national unity' patriotism," and support for Obama as the future Commander-in-Chief of U.S. imperialism ("ILWU Shuts West Coast Ports on May Day," *WV* No. 914, 9 May 2008). Thus, we noted that the ILWU tops buried any mention of the war in Afghanistan, which Obama championed.

The IG, echoing its favorite left-talking labor faker, ILWU Local 10 Exec Board member Jack Heyman, screamed bloody murder over our supposed slander. But antiwar activist Cindy Sheehan, who was a speaker at the ILWU rally and was then running as an independent candidate against Democrat Nancy Pelosi, confirmed what we said. Sheehan told *Workers Vanguard* that Heyman's co-emcee at the rally and fellow Exec Board member Clarence Thomas "said that I couldn't say anything bad about Nancy Pelosi or talk about Afghanistan; I was supposed to stay focused only on Iraq" (quoted in "Antiwar Reformists, Labor Bureaucrats and the Democratic Party: The Syphilitic Chain," *WV* No. 945, 23 October 2009)!

To paraphrase the IG: it is one thing to read in history books about former revolutionaries capitulating to programs alien to Marxism, but here we see the process unfolding in real time, before our eyes. ■

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Britain...

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Workers Party (SWP). Demonstrations organised by UAF are not intended to stop fascist provocations: the UAF slogan "Stop the BNP" in reality often means that the state should ban the BNP. We oppose calls on the capitalist state to ban the fascists, which will invariahly he used against the left. The role of the capitalist state—in particular its police, prisons and courts—is to maintain order within the framework of private property relations and therefore it embodies the chauvinism that is inherent in capitalist society.

Anti-Fascist Myths Glorify Bourgeois "Democracy"

The standard reformist answer to fascism is to unite all "democratic" forces into a cross-class coalition. This is today embodied in UAF, whose strategy consists of using bourgeois "democracy" as a bulwark against the fascists. But the counterposition between bourgeois "democracy" and fascism is false. Parliamentary democracy, imperialism's preferred method of rule, is merely the best disguise for the dictatorship of the capitalists. Fascism in power is another form of the dictatorship of finance capital, one which the bourgeoisie only resorts to under extreme circumstances such as when its rule is threatened by the proletariat mobilised for revolution.

In the post-Soviet climate, the fact that the capitalist ruling classes currently face no threat from the insurgent proletariat means that fascist organisations across Europe have increasingly focused on parliamentary activity. Thus in France in 2002 when Le Pen's National Front fascists scored big gains in the presidential elections they did so primarily as an ***electorol party*** and in Italy Gianfranco Fini's formerly neo-fascist party mutated into an electoral party that merged with Berlusconi's Freedom People movement in March 2009.

Our demand that fascist provocations must be *stopped* rests on the understanding that there is n***othing to debote*** with fascists. What's to debate with supporters of the Holocaust, for example? The fascists' methods of "debate" are the firebomb, the lynch rope and other murderous weapons. However today reformists and liberals are rushing headlong to debate the fascists. Leading the pack is *Searchlight* editor Nick Lowles, who proclaimed a "new reality" in July 2009, a month after the BNP won two seats in the European Parliament. Lowles argues that:

> "Searchlight comes from a proud tradition of No Platform, a belief that fascism should not be allowed to air its politics of hate publicly. We have always opposed legitimising fascism through public debate and where fascists try to incite hatred within communities through provocative marches and actions, we have backed mobilisations against them.
> "While I still adhere to this in principle I also believe that we have to accept a new reality. Firstly the BNP has MEPs and whether we like it or not Nick Griffin and Andrew Brons will appear more regularly on television. No platform agreements between political parties were already breaking down before the election, with only Labour holding to them, and this process is likely to quicken now."
> —"The Way Forward," *Searchlight* (July 2009)

Related to this, Lowles argues in the same article: "To fight the BNP effectively we must move away from city and town centre events to focusing on the very communities where the BNP is drawing its support"—in other words more electioneering among the racist BNP voters. The SWP's strategy of "use your vote" means voting Labour (or some alternative), absolving the Labour government of its role in putting the wind in the sails of the fascists.

The Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) in *Weekly Worker* (15 October 2009) mocks any demonstrations against the fascists as "mindless 'fash-bashing'" and an article by Eddie Ford denies that the EDL is fascist, insisting they are but "a motley and ugly" alliance of "nationalist, far-right and lumpen elements, such as intoxicated football hooligans and semi-criminal riff-raff," a description which sounds like any gang of fascist scum. The CPGB equates any opposition to the fascists with the SWP's reformism, but its criticism of the SWP for grovelling appeals to the state to ban the fascists is a cover for the CPGB's line, which amounts to ***doing nothing*** to combat the BNP or the EDL. Rather than protesting against Griffin outside the BBC, the CPGB suggested that "the establishment make room for the Marxist left on its platforms" (*Weekly Worker*, 1 October 2009).

SWP honcho John Molyneux argued in a letter to *Socialist Worker* (13 June 2009) that the SWP shouldn't make a "fetish" out of not debating the fascists.

Workers Hammer

March 2005 protest against planned extradition of Babar Ahmad, victim of Labour government's "anti-terror" witchhunt.

Meanwhile, according to the SWP's Preconference Bulletin No. 1 (October 2009):

> "A discussion has been taking place in the party about our stance on No Platform for the BNP. While our committment to denying the fascists a platform is not in doubt, there have been calls from comrades centrally involved in Unite Against Fascism to scrap our opposition to debating with the BNP leadership in the media."

The SWP leadership has decided not to debate Griffin, at least for now.

When the EDL began mobilising in major city centres in the summer of 2009, UAF was lukewarm about mobilising any kind of counter-demonstration. A petition on UAF's Web site (25 September 2009) called on the home secretary, local council and police to ban the 10 October EDL demo in Manchester. According to Permanent Revolution's Web site (permanentrevolution.net, 11 October 2009), when this was denied UAF sought permission to rally on the other side of the city. However, the cops placed the UAF demo near the EDL mob of 500-700 thugs and "kettled" [tightly surrounded] the anti-fascist demonstrators. UAF deliberately called its demonstration for noon, two hours after the EDL provocation began. *Socialist Worker* (17 October 2009) reports that the North West TUC [Trades Union Congress] urged people to stay "away from the UAF protest."

Workers Power defends the position "no platform for fascists," saying: "Communists see fascist organisations as instruments of civil war against the working class. Their aim is to smash the workers movement." They conclude: "We believe they [the fascists] have to be stopped from organising their forces. This is the policy of 'no platform.' Wherever fascists seek to grow and develop their influence and support, communists seek to organise united action of workers, youth and anti-racists to stop them" (workerspower.com, 29 September 2009). What Workers Power doesn't say is that upholding the slogan "no platform for fascists" in no way precludes—indeed is often synonymous with—calling on the state to ban the fascists. Workers Power attacks UAF for its failure to physically stop the fascists in the streets, saying: "Though UAF sees the need to protest against the BNP, it suffers from having to limit its arguments and tactics to what the capitalist politicians and figures on the right wing of the labour movement will accept." The problem with UAF is not that it lacks militant tactics, hut its reformist programme, which Workers Power shares.

Reformists Seek Unity Behind Chauvinist "British Jobs" Crusade

Nowhere is the political bankruptcy of the Labourite left more evident than in their pleas for unity with the leadership of the reactionary strikes for "British jobs for British workers." Both the SWP and Workers Power look to the Socialist Party and RMT [Rail, Maritime and Transport union] leader Bob Crow, who led the No2EU coalition at the time of the European Parliament elections, to form a new electoral vehicle for the 2010 general election. No2EU was founded on support to the "British jobs for British workers" strikes and protests that began at Lindsey oil refinery in January 2009.

The Socialist Party's claim that these strikes were not aimed at foreign workers is a whitewash. At a protest in Newark, Nottinghamshire on 24 February 2009 a section of the demonstrators chanted "foreigners out" while another anti-immigrant strike in May in Milford Haven, South Wales resulted in some 40 Polish workers losing their jobs. According to the *Guardian* Web site (21 May 2009), the strike was settled when "the Dutch-based employer, Hertel, agreed to withdraw 40 Poles and replace them with UK staff at the terminal owned by ExxonMobil and Total." The Socialist Party proclaimed the outcome as yet another "victory" and blatantly admitted that the British workers "were not opposed to laggers [insulation workers] from Poland getting work on the site as long as local laggers were given the opportunity of the work first as under the union agreement" (*Socialist*, 28 May-3 June 2009).

No2EU's election strategy consisted of feeding at the same trough as the BNP, aiming to compete for the racist vote. In November the Socialist Party and Bob Crow formed a new coalition for the 2010 election. Its leadership also includes Brian Caton—leader of the Prison Officers Association, part of the armed fist of the capitalist state—who is now a proud member of the Socialist Party. Given its history as No2EU and its leadership, this "new" coalition could be nothing other than a vehicle for chauvinism, class collaboration and betrayal. But Workers Power criticises this cabal because they will not *form o porty*, and therefore "will not stop the Tories but, on the contrary, demoralise working class activists and deliver the more backward and disorganised parts of our class over to the British National Party, which can pose as 'anti-establishment' unopposed by a genuine, radical party of the left."

The notion that a mass workers party should accommodate would-be BNP voters expresses Workers Power's commitment to a social-democratic "party of the whole class." This view, which is common to all Labourite organisations including the Socialist Party and SWP, sees the workers party as an analogue of the trade unions, embracing the most advanced as well as the most hackward layers of the working class, in which the backward layers usually dominate. In contrast, the Leninist vanguard party that we seek to build necessarily excludes from its ranks all chauvinists and bases itself on the most advanced layers, fighting every manifestation of backwardness, chauvinism and prejudice, leading the entire working class and acting as a "tribune of the people."

The protectionist poison expressed in the "British jobs" strikes is inherent to the programme of social democracy. To workers facing ruin by the capitalist economic crisis, it substitutes class collaboration for class struggle, lining workers up behind their own capitalist rulers. Protectionism is common among "left" union leaders, including former NUM leader Arthur Scargill, militant leader of the heroic 1984-85 miners strike, who expressed his support for the "British jobs" crusade in a 4 November interview with Indymedia Ireland. Asked about the Lindsey oil refinery strike Scargill said: "You can't have a situation [where] you can just move migrant labour, migrant capital into a society without it having devastating effects on the whole society," while emphasising that: "I'm not talking about immigration [and] I'm not talking about asylum seekers! I'm talking about migrant labour being moved by capitalism."

Our proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist programme is flatly counterposed to nationalist protectionism. We insist that until the working class takes state power, we will not be in a position to worry about the ebbs and flows of labour migration or the world economy more generally. We have noted that in cases such as the Lindsey strike, the bottom line for the trade-union movement must not be *whom* the contractors hire, but at ***whot rate of poy***. The way to undercut attempts by the bosses to "level down" the wages and working conditions, including safety standards, of all workers, by playing off one nationality against the other, is for the unions to demand: ***Full union poy for all work ot the prevailing rote, no motter who does the job! Equol pay for equol work!*** This poses the need for international collaboration among construction workers across European countries.

Twelve years of Labour rule has meant an even more rapid de-industrialisation than under Margaret Thatcher. The chronic job losses have been devastating for the working class. Entire areas of the country, from the former coal-mining and steel-producing areas of England, Scotland and Wales to the desolate former textile towns such as Bradford and Oldham offer little hope of a decent job. The situation cries out for a socialist revolution and a planned economy to regenerate social and economic life. There is no answer to the boom-and-bust cycle of capitalism short of proletarian socialist revolution that takes power out of the hands of the irrational capitalist ruling class and establishes a planned, socialised economy. The greatest obstacle to this is the social-chauvinist Labourite leadership of the working class who are loyal to British capitalism. We seek to build a multiethnic revolutionary workers party, forged in opposition to Labourism, to overthrow the racist capitalist order and replace it with working-class rule.■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Britain: Fascists Feed on Labour Government Racism

The following article is reprinted from Workers Hammer *No. 209 (Winter 2009-2010), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).*

WORKERS HAMMER

The British National Party (BNP) was awarded a badge of bourgeois respectability when the BBC defied a storm of protest to host its leader Nick Griffin on *Question Time* in October 2009. Having won two seats in the European Parliament and obtained over 900,000 votes in local elections in June, the BNP thugs intend to increase their vote in the 2010 elections. The televised "debate" took place largely on the BNP's terrain of virulent anti-immigrant racism, with representatives of all parties arguing over who is to "blame" for immigration. Labour was represented by none other than justice minister Jack Straw, who in 2006 fanned the flames of anti-Muslim racism with a provocative public declaration that he "prefers" Muslim women not to wear the *niqab* (veil) when coming to his constituency office (see "Britain: Racism and the Islamic Veil," *Workers Vanguard* No. 886, 16 February 2007).

Responsibility for the current rise of the BNP lies squarely with the Labour governments of the last twelve years, which have relentlessly pursued the racist "war on terror" against Muslims and vied with the BNP for being "tough" on immigrants. The BNP is also thriving on attacks on immigrants, who are being scapegoated for the loss of jobs brought on by the capitalist economic crisis. Among those rounded up for deportation in a racist dragnet by the state were cleaners at London's School of Oriental and African Studies and construction workers at the London Olympics site. The BNP are also reaping gains out of the reactionary crusade against foreign workers that began at Lindsey oil refinery in January 2009 under the slogan of "British jobs for British workers" (see "Down With Reactionary Strikes Against Foreign Workers!" *WV* No. 930, 13 February 2009). Responsibility for this lies with the Socialist Party [of Peter Taaffe, affiliated with Socialist Alternative in the U.S.] and the trade-union bureaucracy, who led this campaign. We say: Down with reactionary strikes against foreign workers! No deportations! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! For trade-union/minority mobilisations to stop fascist provocations!

Workers Hammer

London: Protest against fascist BNP leader Nick Griffin appearing on BBC's *Question Time* program, October 22.

No one should be fooled by the BNP's posture as a parliamentarist outfit: the BNP is and has been a fascist organisation since its inception. Fascists are paramilitary shock troops for all-sided reaction, particularly racist terror against immigrants and minorities, and smashing the organisations of the working class. As Trotsky explained in *Whither France?* (October 1934):

> "Finance capital is obliged to create special armed bands trained to fight the workers.... The historic function of fascism is to smash the working class, destroy its organizations, and stifle political liberties when the capitalists find themselves unable to govern and dominate with the help of democratic machinery."

Griffin was convicted in 1998 of inciting racial hatred for articles that denied the Nazi Holocaust. The Nazi regime was unparalleled in its barbarity. The Holocaust was the systematic extermination of six million Jews, as well as homosexuals, Gypsies and millions of Slavs. Hitler's Nazis placed themselves at the head of European reaction. From 1918 to 1923, Germany came to the brink of revolution a number of times, but the proletariat was defeated. For the failure of the Russian Revolution to spread to the rest of Europe, humanity was made to pay with Nazi terror and the Holocaust.

In the inter-war period of economic and social crisis in Europe, where the facade of parliamentary democracy could no longer deceive and contain the militant working class, the bourgeoisie looked to fascist reaction to smash the workers organisations. But this did not make the Allied imperialist "democracies" anti-fascist fighters. Contrary to the myth of the "democratic war against fascism," we uphold the Trotskyist position on WWII of revolutionary defeatism for *all* the imperialists—Allied and Axis powers—and for unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state. It was the Soviet Union that smashed the Nazi war machine, at a cost of over 20 million Soviet lives.

Trade Unions/Minorities Must Stop EDL Provocations!

We warned last issue that "the election of BNPers Nick Griffin and Andrew Brons to the European Parliament gives respectability to the fascist stormtroopers and will lead to increased attacks on the streets, posing *real and present danger* to minorities, gays and leftists" ("The Bankruptcy of Labour," *Workers Hammer* No. 208, Autumn 2009). This warning has been borne out: since the summer an outfit calling itself the English Defence League (EDL) has staged numerous, high-profile demonstrations in several cities, including Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds and London. EDL marches are racist provocations, targeting Muslims in particular, using outrageous slogans such as "Muslim bombers off our streets." These provocations must be met with massive protest centred on the trade unions mobilised for defence of Muslims, immigrants and all the intended victims of the EDL scum.

All evidence points to the fact that the EDL is a fascist organisation. The EDL was set up by BNP members (or recent ex-members) and organised through networks of football "casuals" who have long been linked with the fascists. In Luton, the EDL targeted Muslim organisations who protested against a parade in March 2009 by the Royal Anglian Regiment on their return from Iraq. The EDL were particularly incensed at placards describing British soldiers as "butchers of Basra." This is a rather benign description of British Army brutality in a city where in 2003 Baha Mousa was horrifically put to death in the custody of the Queens Lancashire Regiment, having suffered 93 separate injuries.

The EDL is linked to a number of fascistic organisations such as "Stop the Islamisation of Europe" and its mobilisations have targeted mosques, such as in Harrow, London. Britain's fascists have historically had links to the anti-Catholic Ulster Loyalist paramilitaries. At a November 2009 demonstration in Glasgow by the Scottish Defence League the Loyalist slogan "No surrender to the IRA!" was chanted. Today, according to the anti-fascist magazine *Searchlight*, the BNP has its call centre in Northern Ireland. The EDL makes a point of thrusting a couple of mixed-race faces to the fore when facing the press but its claim that it is not racist is hogwash.

It is in the interests of the multiethnic working class as a whole to combat these racist terrorists. We call for trade union/minority mobilisations to stop fascist provocations. At the same time, as Marxists we make clear that the decaying capitalist system breeds the social conditions in which the fascists thrive and therefore the struggle against fascism is inseparable from the fight for socialist revolution.

The BNP führer used the BBC debate to engage in open gay-bashing, declaring that he finds the idea of two men kissing "creepy." Recent months have seen a dramatic rise in murderous homophobic attacks. On 13 October 2009 Ian Baynham died of severe injuries received in a homophobic attack in London's Trafalgar Square; on 25 October James Parkes, a 22-year-old gay man (who is a trainee cop) suffered multiple skull fractures when he was attacked by up to 20 people as he left a gay night club in Liverpool, while two transsexual women were also murdered —Andrea Waddell in Brighton in October and Destiny Lauren in London in November. In response to the rise in homophobic attacks and in memory of the victims of the fascist firebombing of a gay bar in London's Soho ten years ago, thousands held vigils in London, Liverpool and other cities at the end of October.

Our call for trade union/minority mobilisations is counterposed to wretched appeals to the capitalist state to halt fascist provocations. Mobilising the social power of the trade unions to defend immigrants and minorities requires a political struggle against the reformist trade-union bureaucracy and is counterposed to the "anti-fascist" strategy of Unite Against Fascism (UAF), built by the Socialist

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Spartacist League/ Britain contingent at 16 October 1993 anti-fascist demonstration in London.

WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 953 | GCIU C-701 | 26 February 2010

U.S. Beefs Up Racist Border Controls

Mexico: Down With "Drug Wars" Militarization!

Reuters

Military convoy in Ciudad Juárez, June 2009. Nearly 2,000 soldiers poured into the city as part of military mobilization in Mexican "drug wars."

For Workers Revolution on Both Sides of the Border!

The massacre last month of 16 people, mostly teenagers, in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, was just the latest bloody evidence of the "drug wars" that have claimed nearly 20,000 lives in that country since 2001. Last year, some 2,700 people were killed in Juárez alone, making this one of the most violent cities on the planet. Shootouts happen frequently in Mexican cities, many carried out in broad daylight, as drug cartels and their police adjuncts battle over control of the booming trade, which mainly supplies the U.S. market. The cartels often torture and decapitate rivals in the trade, placing their heads next to posters with threatening messages. Videos of such sadistic handiwork are regularly posted on YouTube. One man, nicknamed "El Pozolero" (the Stewmaker), admitted he had dissolved some 300 bodies in acid over ten years to dispose of them for the Tijuana Cartel.

The gruesome reality of *narcoviolencia* has provided President Felipe Calderón of the right-wing National Action Party (PAN) a pretext to systematically reinforce the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois state. Calderón has deployed some 45,000 army troops throughout the country, along with thousands of federal police. In many cities, including northern industrial centers like Tijuana, Nogales, Ciudad Juárez, Reynosa and Nuevo Laredo, the army assumed police powers.

If anything, the deployment of the military has led to an increase in the bloodletting along with intensified repression of the working class and the urban and rural poor. At stake in the drug wars is control of what is up to a $25 billion a year business (about the same as remittances from the U.S.) that plays a central role in the capitalist economy, directly involving an estimated 150,000 people and linked to some 78 percent of legal business activities, according to *Proceso* magazine (15 March 2009). Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán Loera, leader of the Sinaloa Cartel, has even made the *Forbes* magazine list of billionaires. And from the government ministries on down to the cops, Mexico's capitalist state apparatus is thoroughly interpenetrated with the drug cartels.

From the beginning of his regime, Calderón has moved to bolster the bourgeois state, including through increasing reliance on the military. As he took office in 2006, Calderón was faced with social upheaval as millions protested his fraudulent electoral victory against Andrés Manuel López Obrador of the bourgeois-populist Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). Miners as well as teachers and indigenous communities in Oaxaca and peasants in the State of Mexico protested government repression and attacks on their livelihoods. One of the Calderón government's first measures was to hike military pay by *45 percent* in February 2007 in order to assure the army's allegiance. Backed by massive U.S. military aid, the regime has relied on the increasing militarization of the country to push through attacks on trade unions and yet more austerity measures.

While social unrest has subsided over the last couple of years, Mexico remains a deeply unstable society, with the working class and the poor further ravaged by the world economic recession. In describing the militarization that has been reinforced under the "war on drugs," our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México noted in *Espartaco* No. 31

continued on page 8

Getty

U.S. Air Force

Left: Sheriff's deputies arrest Latino immigrant workers in California, February 2009. Right: National Guard soldier monitoring Arizona-Mexico border in 2006.

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Feds Let South Dakota Reservation Freeze

LeNae LeBeau

Massive storm cut off power and water for thousands on Cheyenne River Reservation in January.

A fierce ice storm hit the impoverished Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota on January 20, cutting off electrical power for most of the 10,000 Native Americans there. The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, its emergency fund of $175,000 already drained by earlier storms, was left virtually defenseless. Desperate families waited for days in the dark without food—some without water as well—before minimal relief finally began to arrive. With windchills reaching 20 degrees below zero, many were without power for up to several weeks. The tribe's chairman, Joseph Brings Plenty, declared: "We could have had quite a few people perish in this."

The plight of the South Dakota reservation has been particularly highlighted by MSNBC's Keith Olbermann, whose appeal to his viewers raised some $250,000 in relief funds in 48 hours. For their part, government relief agencies doled out aid with an eyedropper, recalling the racist indifference shown the largely black and poor population of New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. On January 31, the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe declared a state of emergency and requested federal disaster relief funds, medical supplies and generators. The reservation was granted an insufficient number of emergency generators, forcing tribal leaders to beg for more. As for federal relief funds, what they mainly got was the runaround. A spokesman for the South Dakota Department of Public Safety announced—almost two weeks after the start of the crisis—that federal funds could not be allocated until the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) got around to surveying the situation. He stated, "It may be two or three weeks before FEMA can assess the damage." Adding insult to injury, the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe was the first Native tribe to officially endorse Barack Obama for president.

This crisis highlights the wretched poverty of Native Americans living on reservations like Cheyenne River, for whom disaster can be just one storm away. The statistics tell a shameful story of discrimination and neglect. Unemployment at the Cheyenne River Reservation is a staggering 80 percent. At the neighboring Standing Rock Reservation, which was also severely hit by the storm, per capita income is about $7,730 a year. Standing Rock's average male life expectancy of 47 years is just two and a half years better than in Afghanistan!

This is part of the legacy of racist American capitalism's bloody origins. Take the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). The BIA Web site touts that its mission is to "enhance the quality of life, to promote economic opportunity, and to carry out the responsibility to protect and improve the trust assets of American Indians, Indian tribes, and Alaska Natives." This sick lie has long been the target of humor and anger, including the line "B.I.A., I'm not your Indian anymore" in the late Floyd Red Crow Westerman song "B.I.A.," a hit during the period of Native American activism in the late 1960s and early '70s.

U.S. capitalism was born in the genocidal extermination of Native Americans and the enslavement of black Africans. As we wrote in "Genocide 'Made in USA'" (*WV* No. 581, 30 July 1993):

> "From the governor of New Netherlands, who introduced scalping to North America as a means by which Indian-hunting bounty seekers could claim their payments, to the 1838 'Trail of Tears,' where thousands died as the entire 14,000-strong Cherokee nation was force-marched from their home in Georgia to the barren Oklahoma plains, to the final massacre at Wounded Knee, South Dakota in 1890 when the U.S. Army assassinated 300 unarmed men, women and children—the westward march of U.S. capitalism was guided by the spirit of General Sheridan's notorious remark: 'There are no good Indians but dead Indians'."

We dealt in depth with the oppression of Native Americans in the three-part series "Marxism & the American Indian Question" (*Young Spartacus* Nos. 27, 28 and 31; December 1974, January and April 1975), where in the second part we wrote: "With the destruction of aboriginal tribal society, Indians became social refuse and wards of the state. Although the federal government finally granted citizenship rights to Indians in 1924, the state maintains an essentially custodial relationship to the reservations, holding the land 'in trust.' Until the New Deal's Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) of 1934, the reservations were ruled autocratically by the agents of the Bureau of Indian Affairs."

Under the IRA, the government introduced limited self-rule on the reservations, creating a layer of Native bureaucrats. Later, it attempted to "free" Native Americans by terminating tribal status and thereby ending the federal assistance programs and tax exemptions, the economic margin upon which many survived. Through this, the capitalist class sought to rid itself of the burden of either developing the reservations or integrating Native Americans into bourgeois society and the labor force.

We fight to build a Leninist workers party, a tribune of the people that champions the rights of Native Americans. As we concluded in *Young Spartacus* No. 28:

> "Capitalism confronts the Indians, who are cynically termed the 'Vanishing American,' only with the prospects of either oppressive urban lumpenization or the abominable reservation, with its squalor, cultural deprivation, high infant mortality, chronic alcoholism and rampant teenage suicide. Only the destruction of capitalism through proletarian revolution and the inauguration of the era of socialist development can insure the all-sided voluntary integration of the American Indian into society on the basis of the fullest equality and meet the special needs created by well over a century of injustice and oppression."■

TROTSKY

LENIN

Students and Capitalist Society

A Leninist vanguard party is built through the fusion of the most politically conscious workers with intellectuals who have been won over to the side of the working class. In his 1910 article, "The Intelligentsia and Socialism," Leon Trotsky examined the role of intellectuals in capitalist society, refuting the view expressed in Austrian Social Democrat Max Adler's 1910 pamphlet "Socialism and the Intellectuals" that the mass of intellectuals are predisposed to socialism. In particular, Trotsky focused on students, who tend to be polarized to radicalism or reaction under the influence of social struggle, drawing on their differing roles in the defeated European democratic revolutions of 1848.

Among the workers the difference between "fathers" and "sons" is purely one of age. Among the intelligentsia it is not only a difference of age but also a social difference. The student, in contrast both to the young worker and to his own father, fulfils no social function, does not feel direct dependence on capital or the state, is not bound by any responsibilities, and—at least objectively, if not subjectively—is free in his judgment of right and wrong. At this period everything within him is fermenting, his class prejudices are as formless as his ideological interests, questions of conscience matter very strongly to him, his mind is opening for the first time to great scientific generalisations, the extraordinary is almost a physiological need for him. If collectivism is at all capable of mastering his mind, now is the moment, and it will indeed do it through the nobly scientific character of its basis and the comprehensive cultural content of its aims....

Throughout their entire history—in its best, most heroic moments just as in periods of utter moral decay—the students of Europe have been merely the sensitive barometer of the bourgeois classes. They became ultra-revolutionary, sincerely and honourably fraternizing with the people, when bourgeois society had no way out but revolution. They took *de facto* the place of the bourgeois democratic forces when the political nullity of these prevented them from standing at the head of the revolution, as happened in Vienna in 1848. But they also fired on the workers in June of that same year, in Paris, when bourgeoisie and workers found themselves on opposite sides of the barricade.... Here we have militant idealism—sometimes just like that of a fighting cock—which is characteristic not of a class or of an idea but of an age-group; on the other hand, the political content of this idealism is entirely determined by the historical spirit of those classes from which the students come and to which they return. And this is natural and inevitable.

—Leon Trotsky, "The Intelligentsia and Socialism" (1910)

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No. 953 **26 February 2010**

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BAY AREA

Thursday, March 18, 6:30 p.m.

The Emancipation of Women Through Socialist Revolution

San Francisco State University
Cesar Chavez Student Center
Rosa Parks D

Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
sycbayarea@sbcglobal.net

NEW YORK CITY

Wednesday, March 3, 7:30 p.m.

Women's Oppression and the Family

Hunter College
West Building, Room 509C
(No. 6 train to 68th St.-Hunter College)

Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
nysl@tiac.net

LOS ANGELES

Sunday, February 28, 12 noon

The Revolution Betrayed

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
slsycla@sbcglobal.net

Visit the ICL Web Site:
www.icl-fi.org

CHICAGO

Wednesday, March 3, 5:30 p.m.

The Revolution Betrayed

University of Illinois at Chicago
Room 603, Student Center East
750 S. Halsted Street

(Exit Halsted Street at UIC-Halsted stop on CTA Blue Line)

Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
chicagosyc@sbcglobal.net

TORONTO

Wednesday, March 10, 6 p.m.

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

University of Toronto
Sidney Smith Hall, Room 1080
100 St. George Street

Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
spartcan@on.aibn.com

VANCOUVER

Thursday, March 4, 6:30 p.m.

Independence for Quebec! Marxism and the National Question

UBC, Student Union Building, Rm. 224

Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
trotskyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

Budget Cuts Slam Workers, Poor

Chicago: Transit Jobs Under the Ax

CHICAGO—At the direction of the Democratic Party administration of Mayor Richard Daley, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) imposed sweeping layoffs and service cuts on February 7 to close a major budget shortfall. More than 1,000 union drivers, repairmen, servicers and skilled workers—*over one-tenth of the entire workforce*—have already been laid off or are slated to lose their jobs in the coming week. The drastic measures include slashing 18 percent of bus service, affecting 119 of 150 routes, and 9 percent of rail service. Some one million people ride CTA buses and almost 650,000 ride the trains on an average workday. Particularly hard hit are the poorest black and Latino neighborhoods on the South and West Sides, where working people are heavily dependent on mass transit to make it to their jobs. Waiting times on these routes already are the longest and the buses are the oldest.

Boss Daley, the CTA and the bourgeois press are carrying out a major media blitz to blame the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Locals 241 (bus) and 308 (rail) and 15 craft unions representing Chicago transit workers for the severity of the cuts. Union members are pilloried for refusing to swallow massive concessions: wage freezes, increased health care payments and unpaid furlough days. With the economy in shambles, the message for workers everywhere has been "sacrifice or else" as the bosses make workers pay for the capitalist economic crisis. Capitalist Democratic Party politicians, whether in the White House, the Statehouse or City Hall, together with the Republicans have gone after the unions and gutted public services used by the working class and poor.

Starting from the top, President Barack Obama forked out billions to the Wall Street bankers and engineered the bailout of the auto giants by tearing up union gains won through decades of hard struggle—with the active assistance of the venal sellouts atop the United Auto Workers. At the same time, the Obama administration has ratcheted up U.S. imperialist military operations in Afghanistan while continuing the occupation of Iraq. Layoffs, speedups, imperialist depredations abroad—these are the workings of a system of exploitation dedicated to squeezing profits for the tiny class of capitalist rulers out of the blood and sweat of those who labor.

To effectively fight the bosses' attacks, the unions must rely on their own strength, operating with the basic understanding that the interests of capital and labor are counterposed and irreconcilable. The ATU locals have a lot of social power, with the ability to shut down mass transit in Chicago, and could spearhead a struggle for the fighting unity of all city labor. The multiracial union membership is also a living link to the dispossessed ghetto masses. In "Segregation City," many blacks and Latinos are consigned to a life of poverty, military service or prison. A federal civil rights lawsuit filed earlier this year exposed the huge gap between funding for commuter trains from Chicago's middle-class, white suburbs and for bus and rail service in the inner city, where people often spend hours in the darkness and frigid cold making multiple connections to get to work or school. Championing demands addressed to the needs of the poor and oppressed—from the fight for free mass transit to free, quality health care for all—would win the ATU plenty of allies.

But this class-struggle perspective could not be further from the outlook of the ATU and other trade-union tops. From their embrace of Democratic Party candidates in the just-finished Illinois primary elections to their support to Obama in 2008, the ATU bureaucrats act as what American socialist leader Daniel De Leon over a century ago called "the labor lieutenants of capital," tying the unions to the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. Their allegiance to the supposed "lesser evil" Democrats has facilitated the bourgeois rulers' assaults on the American working class and poor: the dismantling of millions of heavily unionized manufacturing jobs, cuts in social programs and rampant cop terror in the ghettos and barrios. To advance its cause, labor must break with the capitalist parties—Democrat and Republican.

WV Photo

Demonstration outside Chicago transit headquarters against layoffs and service cuts, January 20.

A comrade of the Spartacist League laid out these basic Marxist truths while intervening at a CTA public hearing on Chicago's South Side on 3 November 2009. Turning his back to the CTA board members, our comrade declared that "the only people worth addressing here are those who are here to protest these vicious cuts." He continued:

> "Why do we continue to bleed? It's because of the allegiance of working people and minorities to the Democratic Party. It's the other party of war and racism, the other party of the capitalist system, the other party of the profit system, the other party of layoffs and segregation. And we should know that here in Chicago, where they have run things for 60 years. Obama in office has not changed that in the least, in fact, Obama and the Democrats went after the auto workers, they used the auto bailout to gut the union and that's what they intend to do to the transit union, to all the public workers in the state of Illinois."

Far from mobilizing the unions' muscle to *stop* the layoffs and other attacks, the ATU bureaucrats surrendered in advance of a fight. Union leaders offered up their own "menu" of cost-cutting measures, which were rejected by the CTA. Earlier, ATU bureaucrats had filed a grievance demanding that part-time and temporary workers be laid off first. Local 308 president Robert Kelly said in a statement: "The ATU locals always understood, unfortunately, that our members would be laid off and our dispute was only about using seniority with the CTA to determine who would be laid off first." According to *Medill Reports* (3 December 2009), this sentiment was echoed by Kelly's counterpart in Local 241, Darrell Jefferson: "If anyone is gonna go, it has to be part-timers." Predictably, an arbitrator in short order tossed out the union grievance on February 3, paving the way for the layoffs to begin four days later.

The union must defend seniority rights, while at the same time fighting for equal pay for equal work with no second-class union membership. In the face of mass layoffs, what is posed is a fight for *jobs for all*—for a shorter workweek with full-time pay and benefits for everyone.

Even if the grievance had won, it would have represented no victory. Under the watch of the ATU misleaders over the years, Chicago transit workers have been subjected to one "divide and conquer" scheme after another, including the introduction of part-time work and wage tiers. Two years ago, the union bureaucrats helped roll out an "apprentice" program where ex-convicts are hired for a limited time as servicers at paltry wages with no benefits, while having to pay full union dues but getting no union rights or protections (see "Down With Racist, Anti-Union 'Ex-Offender Apprentice' Scheme!" *WV* No. 923, 24 October 2008). A further barrier to unity in struggle is the division of transit workers into two separate ATU locals and multiple craft unions. The bosses want to drive a wedge into the workforce so they can more easily roll back the wages and working conditions of all union members.

Jefferson has announced plans to ask Local 241 members to strictly follow CTA operating rules if negotiations to reverse the service cuts continue to stall. Instead of a united mobilization, he is proposing a voluntary job action that would make it much easier for the company to victimize individual workers. For the ATU tops such tactics are a means to avoid hard class struggle, but some workers—and the CTA—are taking it seriously enough. The transit bosses are poised to file anti-union injunctions in the event of any perceived work "slowdown" and already have moved to fire one bus operator who distributed a flyer encouraging her co-workers to refuse to work overtime. Local 241 is defending this union activist by relying once again on arbitration, which places the fate of the union and its members in the hands of a "third party" who is in reality on the side of the class enemy. As an elementary act of solidarity, it is crucial for transit unions, and the rest of city labor, to fight against all CTA reprisals.

In raising the prospect of a slowdown, the ATU bureaucrats want nothing more than the opportunity to tinker with the terms of "sacrifice." This is shown by their lash-up with Democratic Party front man Jesse Jackson Sr., who at a press conference at his Rainbow PUSH Coalition headquarters on February 13 said, "There will either be fair negotiations, or they'll be slow roll or no roll." "Fair negotiations" simply means "fair" layoffs or concessions. If labor struggle does break out, Jackson, who postures as a friend of labor and blacks in order to better serve the bosses, will be there to douse the flames. In 2000, a union official brought Jackson into L.A. during a convulsive transit strike, where he set about preaching "reconciliation" to the striking workers so that the local Democrats could ram through a giveback contract deal.

Now, more than two weeks after the bulk of the layoffs, Jefferson is threatening, through the press, to call a strike vote at the next union meeting on March 1. Jefferson is walking a tightrope between the anger of the union ranks and his loyalty to the Democratic Party. Many in ATU Local 241 well remember that when 2,000 workers came to a mass union meeting and authorized a strike in March 2006, Jefferson squandered the members' desire to act in defense of the union and quickly submitted his membership's future to binding arbitration.

Following massive job losses in construction and manufacturing, as the *New York Times* headlined, "Most U.S. Union Members Are Working for the Government, New Data Shows" (22 January).

continued on page 9

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Chicago ..... Box 6441, Main PO, Chicago, IL 60680, (312) 563-0441
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Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m., 3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

New York ..... Box 3381, Church St. Sta., New York, NY 10008, (212) 267-1025
nysl@tiac.net
Public Office: 1st and 3rd Sat. of every month, 1-4 p.m., and by appointment, 299 Broadway, Suite 318

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The BT on Haiti: Postscript to IGiocy

A couple of years ago, we were e-mailed a compendium of internal communiqués among adherents of the International Bolshevik Tendency (BT). While these were kind of crackpot, though revealing of what passes for political discussion in the BT, our attention was drawn to the following proclamation by the organization's supreme leader, Bill Logan: "Our orientation is towards a fusion with the IG [Internationalist Group], a prerequisite to which is obviously some programmatic movement on their part."

It appears that the BT finds such "movement" in the IG's recent declaration that the Spartacist League has "gone over from bending under pressure from the ruling class to outright apology for imperialism" ("Spartacist League Backs U.S. Imperialist Invasion of Haiti," 30 January). A February 9 article posted on the BT's Web site, "Imperialist Troops Out of Haiti!" concurs with "the IG's assessment of the SL's scandalous capitulation over imperialist intervention in Haiti." We refer readers to our article "Haiti: IG Conjures Up Revolution Amid the Rubble" (*WV* No. 952, 12 February) for our answer to the IG's "assessment." As for the BT, its cynicism is, as always, breathtaking.

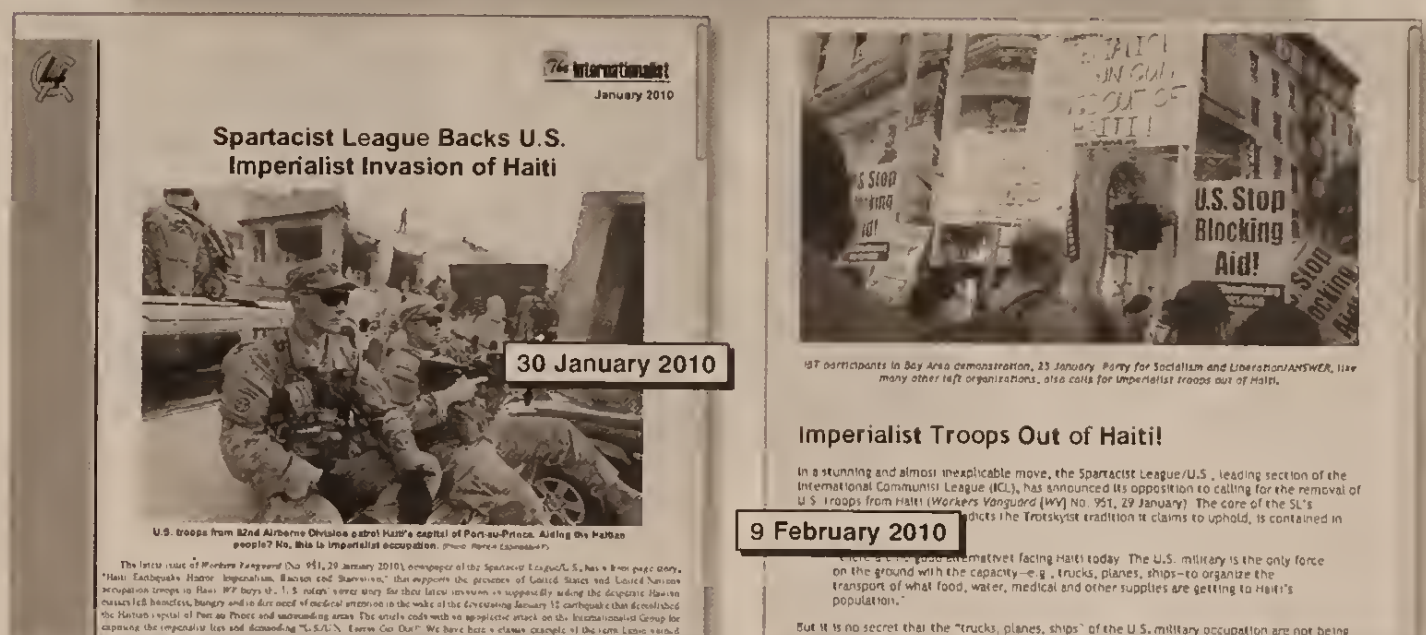
The BT's initial statement on Haiti, dated January 29, two weeks after the quake, did not demand "Imperialist troops out of Haiti!" And when there was a genuine U.S.-led and UN-sponsored invasion of Haiti in 2004, which included a contingent of 500 troops from Canada, where the BT is centered, the BT's newspaper *1917* did not call for "Imperialist troops out of Haiti!" (In fact, we could find only one passing reference to that invasion on the entirety of the BT's Web site.)

The BT couldn't give a damn about imperialist repression of the Haitian masses, an indifference that is matched by their general sneering contempt for special oppression, whether it be the national subjugation of Quebec to the Canadian imperialist state or the vicious segregation and state repression of the black ghetto masses in the U.S. The devastation of Haiti is simply a convenient opportunity for these renegades to practice what has always made them tick: trying to "get" the Spartacist League. This time around they perceive the added advantage of furthering their amorous advances toward the IG.

In some ways the political appetites and sensibilities of the BT and IG are at variance. The IG declared that the earthquake provided an immediate opening for a workers revolt in Haiti, a grotesque fantasy, which, as we pointed out, was animated by their adaptation to Third World nationalism. The BT's sensibilities are those of First World social democrats who promote illusions in the "humanitarian" pretensions of imperialism. This same outlook was explicitly expressed by the British Workers Power group. In a January 21 Web posting, "Haiti—Aid or Colonisation?" Workers Power raised the utterly delusional demand for the "troops to disarm and be placed at the disposal of civilian agencies—or leave Haiti," adding that "all military vehicles and equipment that can be of use should be placed under civilian control."

For its part, the BT points to the Red Cross and Médicins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) as the true source of aid for the desperate Haitian people. But these outfits are nothing other than agencies for imperialism. The self-declared purpose of the American Red Cross is to "carry out responsibilities delegated to it by the federal government"—i.e., U.S. imperialism. For its part, Médicins Sans Frontières was initiated as the "humanitarian" arm of French imperialism. One of its founders, Bernard Kouchner, is now the French government's minister of foreign affairs.

More Gas from the Swamp



Statements by IG (left) and BT (right) against SL on Haiti. Will the "celebrant" Bill Logan officiate at the wedding?

As we noted in "Haiti Earthquake Horror: Imperialism, Racism and Starvation" (*WV* No. 951, 29 January), the grim reality is:

> "There are no good alternatives facing Haiti today. The U.S. military is the only force on the ground with the capacity—e.g., trucks, planes, ships—to organize the transport of what food, water, medical and other supplies are getting to Haiti's population. And they're doing it in the typical piggish U.S. imperialist manner. We have always opposed U.S. and UN occupations in Haiti and everywhere—and it may become necessary to call for U.S./UN out of Haiti in the near future—but we are not going to call for an end to such aid as the desperate Haitian masses can get their hands on."

Devastated by two centuries of colonial and imperialist subjugation, Haiti had virtually no industrial proletariat even before the earthquake hit, and hardly any infrastructure. As our article underlined, "The key to the liberation of Haiti lies in proletarian revolution throughout the hemisphere, in which the mobilization of the sizable Haitian proletariat *in the diaspora* can play a key role." These workers can be a vital link to class struggle by the powerful North American proletariat. To infuse the multiracial U.S. working class with an understanding of its role as the gravedigger of U.S. imperialism requires a political struggle against the pro-capitalist labor misleaders who chain the working class to its capitalist exploiters, centrally through political support to the Democratic Party. Yet the sizable Haitian proletariat in North America goes unmentioned in the IG's article on the earthquake and in the BT's polemic against us. This speaks to their mutual ties to "progressive" labor fakers in the U.S. And here, despite their otherwise different appetites, there is some real political "unity" between the IG and BT.

The Ties That Bind

In the BT's communiqués, the organization's second-in-command, Tom Riley, points to the enthusing by both the BT and IG over the 2008 antiwar West Coast port shutdown by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) as the potential ticket for regroupment. Riley ridicules the IG's view of its role in spurring this action, writing, "I think the IG has really convinced themselves that them showing up at that Bay Area conference selling that pamphlet on Labor Strikes Against the War was instrumental. This isn't just cynicism but actual delusion." Nonetheless, he argues that the "ICL/IG differences on the ILWU labour action are an opening for us" and counsels "the MAIN thing we want to do however is not ridicule them but start pulling at the threads of the Logan Q and the origins of ILWU action."

By the "threads of the Logan Q," Riley means that, for any prospect of unity, the IG will have to embrace BT leader Bill Logan as their own "dear leader." A proven, massive liar and a sociopath, Logan was expelled from our international tendency in 1979 for crimes "against communist morality and its substrate elementary human decency." These included Logan using his organizational position as chairman of our Australian section to break up couples and to try to force a young woman to get an abortion and, failing that, to give up her baby. At the time of Logan's expulsion, IG leader Jan Norden, who was then a leading member of our organization, powerfully and rightly indicted Logan as "a criminally sociopathic individual who should be removed from all working-class organizations" (see "On the Logan Regime

Logan's description of a 1930s Australian labor boycott of pig iron to Japan as an example of working-class struggle against war. In other words, the IG joined Heyman and the BT in legitimizing the twisted Logan as part of the workers movement (see "Labor Opportunists, Renegades Embrace Bill Logan," *WV* No. 901, 26 October 2007).

Such is the price for entry into the Bay Area reformist swamp, where the likes of Heyman specialize in providing "militant" working-class cover for politics that have shackled the unions to the class enemy, particularly the Democratic Party. This is what played out on May Day 2008. The West Coast port shutdown that day was a powerful demonstration of the kind of working-class action that needs to be mobilized against the wars and occupations of U.S. imperialism. But the ILWU International tops channeled it into "loyal to America" patriotism and support for Democratic Party contender Barack Obama as the future Commander-in-Chief of U.S. imperialism. Any mention of the war in Afghanistan, championed by Obama, was deep-sixed.

Today, the BT begs to differ with the IG that we have undergone a "qualitative degeneration" over Haiti. They gently chide IG leaders for "their willfully blind allegiance to everything the SL did prior to their own departure in 1996." For the BT, our "qualitative degeneration" took place in 1983, when we raised the conjunctural demand "Marines Out of Lebanon, Now, Alive" to intersect widespread revulsion over the deaths of 240 U.S. Marines and direct it against the U.S. imperialist rulers. The BT charged us with "social-patriotism" because we didn't cheer the bombing of the Marine barracks as an act of "anti-imperialism."

On the front page of *WV* our Lebanon slogan was coupled with the call, "U.S.

The Logan Dossier

Documentary Evidence and Testimony in the August 1979 Trial and Expulsion of Bill Logan from the international Spartacist tendency for Crimes Against Communist Morality and Elementary Human Decency. Logan is now the leader of the "International Bolshevik Tendency."

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On 1902 Martinique Volcano by Rosa Luxemburg

International Institute of Social History

The following article by revolutionary Marxist leader Rosa Luxemburg was written shortly after a massive volcanic eruption in May 1902 that killed some 40,000 people on the Caribbean island of Martinique, which remains to this day a colony of French imperialism. The article, which originally appeared in the Social Democratic paper Leipziger Volkszeitung *(15 May 1902), appears here as translated in* The Rosa Luxemburg Reader *(Monthly Review Press [2004]). It conveys the hypocrisy of the European Great Powers, with the blood of millions on their hands, rushing to the aid of Martinique.*

Throughout the article Luxemburg refers to various wars and revolutions. These include the Opium Wars of Western intervention into China in the mid 19th century; the Paris Commune of 1871, in which the proletariat briefly governed the city before being crushed by the French army with the support of German forces, with over 20,000 slaughtered; and the Boer Wars of 1880-81 and 1899-1902, when the British imperialists brutally crushed independent Afrikaner states in southern Africa that in turn lorded it over the black African masses. Other such references are explained by brackets in the text.

* * *

Mountains of smoking ruins, heaps of mangled corpses, a steaming, smoking sea of fire wherever you turn, mud and ashes—that is all that remains of the flourishing little city which perched on the rocky slope of the volcano like a fluttering swallow. For some time the angry giant had been heard to rumble and rage against this human presumption, the blind self-conceit of the two-legged dwarfs. Great-hearted even in his wrath, a true giant, he warned the reckless creatures that crawled at his feet. He smoked, spewed out fiery clouds, in his bosom there was seething and boiling and explosions like rifle volleys and cannon thunder. But the lords of the earth, those who ordain human destiny, remained with faith unshaken—in their own wisdom.

On [May] 7th, the commission dispatched by the government announced to the anxious people of St. Pierre that all was in order in heaven and on earth. All is in order, no cause for alarm!—as they said on the eve of the Oath of the Tennis Court in the dance-intoxicated halls of Louis XVI, while in the crater of the revolutionary volcano fiery lava was gathering for the fearful eruption. All is in order, peace and quiet everywhere!—as they said in Vienna and Berlin on the eve of the March eruption fifty years ago [the outbreak of the 1848 European revolutions]. The old, long-suffering titan of Martinique paid no heed to the reports of the honorable commission: after the people had been reassured by the governor on the 7th, he erupted in the early hours of the 8th and buried in a few minutes the governor, the commission, the people, houses, streets and ships under the fiery exhalation of his indignant heart.

The work was radically thorough. Forty thousand human lives mowed down, a handful of trembling refugees rescued—the old giant can rumble and bubble in peace, he has shown his might, he has fearfully avenged the slight to his primordial power.

And now in the ruins of the annihilated city on Martinique a new guest arrives, unknown, never seen before—the human being. Not lords and bondsmen, not blacks and whites, not rich and poor, not plantation owners and wage slaves—human beings have appeared on the tiny shattered island, human beings who feel only the pain and see only the disaster, who only want to help and succor. Old Mt. Pelee has worked a miracle! Forgotten are the days of Fashoda [in 1898, Britain and France nearly went to war over a conflict in Fashoda, Sudan], forgotten the conflict over Cuba, forgotten "la Revanche" —the French and the English, the Tsar and the Senate of Washington, Germany and Holland donate money, send telegrams, extend the helping hand. A brotherhood of peoples against nature's burning hatred, a resurrection of humanism on the ruins of human culture. The price of recalling their humanity was high, but thundering Mt. Pelee had a voice to catch their ear.

France weeps over the tiny island's forty thousand corpses, and the whole world hastens to dry the tears of the Mother Republic. But how was it then, centuries ago, when France spilled blood in torrents for the Lesser and Greater Antilles? In the sea off the east coast of Africa lies a volcanic island—Madagascar: fifty years ago there we saw the disconsolate Republic who weeps for her lost children today, how she bowed the obstinate native people to her yoke with chains and the sword. No volcano opened its crater there: the mouths of French cannons spewed out death and annihilation; French artillery fire swept thousands of flowering human lives from the face of the earth until a free people lay prostrate on the ground, until the brown queen of the "savages" was dragged off as a trophy to the "City of Light."

On the Asiatic coast, washed by the waves of the ocean, lie the smiling Philippines. Six years ago we saw the benevolent Yankees, we saw the Washington Senate at work there [a reference to the 1898 Spanish-American War, in which the U.S. took possession of the Philippines and Cuba—the war had taken place four years previously, not six]. Not fire-spewing mountains—there, American rifles mowed down human lives in heaps; the sugar cartel Senate today sends golden dollars to Martinique, thousands upon thousands, to coax life back from the ruins, sent cannon upon cannon, warship upon warship, golden dollars millions upon millions to Cuba, to sow death and devastation.

Yesterday, today—far off in the African south, where only a few years ago a tranquil little people lived by their labor and in peace, there we saw how the English wreak havoc, these same Englishmen who in Martinique save the mother her children and the children their parents: there we saw them stamp on human bodies, on children's corpses with brutal soldiers boots, wading in pools of blood, death and misery before them and behind.

Ah, and the Russians, the rescuing, helping, weeping Tsar of All the Russians —an old acquaintance! We have seen you on the ramparts of Praga, where warm Polish blood flowed in streams and turned the sky red with its steam [in 1831, the Tsarist army bloodily suppressed a Polish uprising in Praga, a suburb of Warsaw]. But those were the old days. No! Now, only a few weeks ago, we have seen you benevolent Russians on your dusty highways, in ruined Russian villages eye to eye with the ragged, wildly agitated, grumbling mob; gunfire rattled, gasping muzhiks fell to the earth, red peasant blood mingled with the dust of the highway. They must die, they must fall because their bodies doubled up with hunger, because they cried out for bread, for bread!

Library of Congress

View of St. Pierre, destroyed by Mt. Pelée eruption.

And we have seen you too, oh Mother Republic, you tear-distiller. It was on May 23 of 1871: the glorious spring sun shone down on Paris; thousands of pale human beings in working clothes stood packed together in the streets, in prison courtyard, body to body and head to head; through loopholes in the walls, mitrailleuses thrust their bloodthirsty muzzles. No volcano erupted, no lava stream poured down. Your cannons, Mother Republic, were turned on the tight-packed crowd, screams of pain rent the air—over twenty thousand corpses covered the pavements of Paris!

And all of you—whether French and English, Russians and Germans, Italians and Americans—we have seen you all together once before in brotherly accord, united in a great league of nations, helping and guiding each other: it was in China. There too you forgot all quarrels among yourselves, there too you made a peace of peoples—for mutual murder and the torch. Ha, how the pigtails fell in rows before your bullets, like a ripe grainfield lashed by the hail! Ha, how the wailing women plunged into the water, their dead in their cold arms, fleeing the tortures of your ardent embraces!

And now they have all turned to Martinique, all one heart and one mind again; they help, rescue, dry the tears and curse the havoc-wreaking volcano. Mt. Pelee, great-hearted giant, you can laugh; you can look down in loathing at these benevolent murderers, at these weeping carnivores, at these beasts in Samaritan's clothing. But a day will come when another volcano lifts its voice of thunder: a volcano that is seething and boiling, whether you need it or not, and will sweep the whole sanctimonious, blood-splattered culture from the face of the earth. And only on its ruins will the nations come together in true humanity, which will know but one deadly foe—blind, dead nature. ■

Out of Grenada, Dead or Alive" (see *WV* No. 341, 4 November 1983). We did not give military support to any of the contending forces in the bloody civil war in Lebanon, and there was no known force there fighting against the U.S. imperialists. In Grenada, we had a side: with the Cubans and others who *were* fighting against the U.S. imperialist invaders. During the same period we raised the call "kill the invaders" against CIA counterrevolutionary bands who sought to overthrow the leftist Sandinista regime in Nicaragua; we hailed the Soviet Red Army and called on it to mop up the imperialist-backed Islamic reactionaries in Afghanistan; and we supported the suppression of Solidarność imperialist-sponsored counterrevolution in Poland.

None of this was inspired by glorying in dead bodies, but by our proletarian revolutionary internationalist commitment to ending imperialist barbarism. As we wrote in "Marxism and Bloodthirstiness" (*WV* No. 345, 6 January 1984), "*We are for the victory of just causes.* Necessarily and above all, the centrality of just causes is the shattering of the exploiting and oppressing classes and the victory of socialism" (emphasis in original). In contrast, as we noted at the time, the BT's bloodthirstiness was a convenient posture against us and inversely proportional to the distance from where the blood was being shed. The founding members of the BT are, after all, an assortment of embittered ex-members of our organization who got cold feet about our Soviet defensism in the early 1980s when the winds of Cold War II were blowing.

Though the IG has gone some distance down the road to forgiving and forgetting the crimes of BT leader Bill Logan, Logan himself has opined that "some current members of the IG would not manage the personal transformation required by a fusion." Perhaps Logan could apply his well-documented expertise in sadistic and cult-like practices for such a "personal transformation." Today, the BT leader advertises himself as a "professional celebrant"—a New Age equivalent of a faith healer—who specializes in "bereavement," "betrayal," "partnership break-up," "sexuality issues" and other ceremonies derived from the "Anglican and Presbyterian influences of my childhood." If all goes well in the BT's "regroupment" waltz with the IG, Logan can officiate at the wedding. ■

The following article, based on a November 2009 educational presentation in London, is reprinted in slightly edited form from Workers Hammer *No. 209 (Winter 2009-2010), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).*

WORKERS HAMMER

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Moscow, 1918: Red Army soldiers celebrating first anniversary of Russian Revolution under banner hailing "Communism."

October 1917: The Bolshevik Revolution

The 1917 Russian October Revolution was the greatest victory for the working people of the world, a defining event of modern history. For the first time ever the proletariat seized state power and created a workers state based on soviets, or workers councils, under the Bolshevik Party's leadership. As the founder of American Trotskyism, James P. Cannon, put it in 1939:

> "The Russian Bolsheviks on November 7, 1917, once and for all, took the question of the workers' revolution out of the realm of abstraction and gave it flesh and blood reality."
>
> —*Struggle for a Proletarian Party*, 1943

The Soviet government decreed land to the peasants and pulled Russia out of World War I, an interimperialist war. It demanded an immediate peace without annexations, including freedom for the colonies subjugated by the imperialists. It also recognised the right to self-determination of all the non-Russian peoples oppressed under tsarist/capitalist rule.

The Bolshevik Revolution was not made solely for Russia, but for the working masses of the whole world, occurring at a time when the Indian subcontinent, China and Africa were either colonies or semicolonies of the imperialist powers. The Bolshevik Revolution became a beacon to the oppressed masses of all countries, not least in the colonial world. Revulsion against the imperialist rulers as a result of the slaughter in World War I led to a wave of revolutionary and pre-revolutionary struggles in many countries. This wave ended with the defeat of the German Revolution of 1923.

Only in Russia in October 1917 did this upsurge result in the working class taking state power, because uniquely among the socialist organisations of their time, the Bolsheviks had a programme for working-class power. At the outbreak of WWI on 4 August 1914, the German Social Democracy (as well as the Labour Party and most other parties in the Second International) passed definitively into the camp of social-chauvinism by supporting their "own" bourgeoisie in war. WWI was a watershed, provoking a profound realignment in the revolutionary workers movement internationally. Prepared by years of struggle and a decisive split with the Russian opportunists—the Mensheviks—Lenin and the Bolsheviks emerged as the leadership of an international movement to recapture the banner of revolutionary Marxism.

L.Y. Leonidov

Lenin and Trotsky in Red Square on second anniversary of Bolshevik Revolution.

From 1914 onwards Lenin hammered away at two related themes: the need to *split* from the social traitors of the Second International and to fight for a new, Third International; and the call to turn the imperialist war into a civil war against the capitalist system. Lenin's programme for the working classes of all the warring countries was ***revolutionary defeatism***—i.e., the defeat of one's own bourgeoisie is the lesser evil; turn the guns around—the main enemy is at home! Following the Bolshevik Revolution, in 1919 the Third (Communist) International was founded and, under Lenin and Trotsky's leadership, it sought to forge vanguard parties to fight for proletarian revolutions worldwide.

Social-chauvinism is integral to the programme of parties like the Labour Party. Old Labour governments have loyally served the aims of British imperialism, from the bloody partition of India in 1947, leading to communalist slaughter on a mass scale, to sending troops into Northern Ireland in 1969, to introducing vile racist virginity tests for Asian women in Britain in the 1970s. Social-chauvinism is alive and well today, as seen in the reactionary strikes against foreign workers, under the slogan "British jobs for British workers," led by the Socialist Party [affiliated with Socialist Alternative in the U.S.] and trade-union bureaucrats and tacitly supported by most of the Labourite left. In building a party modelled on Lenin's Bolsheviks, our strategic task is to expose such reformist organisations as an obstacle to building a revolutionary party.

Despite the grim poverty of Russia at the time of the October Revolution, the young workers state granted far-reaching measures of equality. It eliminated laws discriminating against women and gave women in Russia a level of equality and freedom that has not yet been attained by the most economically advanced "democratic" capitalist countries today. Just over a month after the revolution, two decrees established civil marriage and allowed for divorce at the request of either partner; all laws against homosexual acts and other consensual sexual activity were also abolished. The Bolshevik position was based on the following principle, as explained in a pamphlet by Grigorii Batkis, director of the Moscow Institute of Social Hygiene, *The Sexual Revolution in Russia* (1923):

> "It declares the absolute non-interference of the state and society into sexual matters, so long as nobody is injured, and no one's interests are encroached upon."

This is light years ahead of the consciousness of liberals and fake leftists today, who go ballistic over our defence of Helen Goddard and of Roman Polanski. Both are behind bars because of "age of consent" laws, under which the bourgeois state accords to itself the right to regulate the sexual activity of youth.

Today's reactionary political climate is shaped largely by counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union in 1991-92. The USSR remained a workers state (although degenerated), despite the rise to power of the Stalinist bureaucratic caste that began in 1923-24, rejecting the revolutionary internationalist programme of the Bolsheviks under Lenin and Trotsky. We upheld the Trotskyist programme of unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of Eastern Europe and called for proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy, and we have a proud record of fighting against the capitalist reunification of Germany in 1989-90 and against counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union.

The message behind today's rejoicing by the capitalist politicians and liberals over counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is: "never again" should the working class hold state power. While organisations such as the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) are dumping any remaining claim to base themselves on the Bolshevik Revolution, we in the ICL uniquely uphold the programme of the Bolshevik Party in that revolution. To quote James Cannon again,

> "We are, in fact, the party of the Russian revolution. We have been the people, and the only people, who have had the Russian revolution in their program and in their blood."
>
> —*Struggle for a Proletarian Party*

There are many lessons from the revolution but the central one that I want to highlight—an issue that set the Bolsheviks apart from their competitors at the time, the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries (SRs)—was the need to combat illusions in bourgeois democracy. Breaking such illusions was central to the fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Ever since October 1917, social democrats and reformists, beginning with the Mensheviks, have denounced the October Revolution, arguing that the Bolsheviks should not have led the proletariat to seize power. Instead, they argue that the Russian proletariat should have supported the liberal bourgeoisie—in the name of "democracy." The main accusation levelled against the Bolsheviks is that they violated bourgeois democracy. What they actually violated was the rule of the landlords and capitalists, based on private property—exactly what bourgeois democracy exists to protect. Bourgeois democracy is a facade to con-

no credit

Above: *Pravda of the Trenches*, published in Latvia by Bolsheviks in the army during World War I. Right: Austrian and Russian soldiers fraternizing at the front, 1917.

VAAP

Petrograd, June 1917: Bolshevik banner (right) reads: "Down With Counter-revolution! Down With the Ten Capitalist Ministers! All Power to the Soviets of Workers, Soldiers and Peasants Deputies! We Demand Immediate Convocation of a Constituent Assembly!"

ceal the reality of capitalist rule which is the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

The State Is Not Neutral

Lenin's pamphlet, *The State and Revolution*, written on the eve of the October Revolution, codifies a central lesson of the revolution: that the proletariat *cannot* use the bourgeois state to achieve a peaceful transition to socialism. Rather, the proletariat must smash the old state machinery, create a new state and impose its own class rule—the dictatorship of the proletariat—to suppress and expropriate the capitalist exploiters.

The role of the reformists today, as it was in 1917, is to reinforce illusions in "democratic" imperialism. For groups like the SWP and Socialist Party, the solution to everything from how to combat the fascist British National Party to ending the British and U.S. imperialist occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan is to appeal to the capitalist state. This is worse than grotesque: these bloody imperialist occupations are not aberrations, but part of the normal workings of "democratic" imperialism. The imperialist rulers have carried out mass murder and torture on an immense scale in their drive to secure world markets; much of the wealth that laid the foundations of British capitalism was acquired from the trade in African slaves. From the Indian subcontinent to Africa and beyond, British colonial rule killed tens of millions, subjugating entire populations. As Karl Marx put it in *Capital*, capitalism was born "dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt."

The Paradox of the February Revolution

The February Revolution of 1917 that overthrew the tsarist monarchy was carried out overwhelmingly by the working class with the peasants, organised in the army, also playing a key role. The spark was a demonstration by women workers on February 23 (on the old calendar, which in the new calendar is March 8, International Women's Day). On February 25 there was a general strike in Petrograd followed by a mutiny in some regiments and the creation of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies. By February 28 the tsar's ministers were arrested. The paradox of the February Revolution was that while workers had toppled the monarchy, power was handed over to the bourgeoisie in the form of the Provisional Government. This bourgeois government existed side by side with the soviets in what was known as "dual power." The central question in Russia following the February Revolution was this: whether to cede power to the bourgeoisie or whether the proletariat should take the power.

Tsarist Russia was the weakest link in the imperialist chain as the Russian bourgeoisie were entirely dependent on the European powers. The particular conditions in Russia were described by Trotsky as "combined and uneven development." A vast mass of hundreds of millions of peasants—who had no mechanised agriculture, were only a generation away from serfdom and were hungry for land—co-existed with urban centres containing a small but concentrated proletariat. Particularly in Petrograd the proletariat was based in large-scale modern factories. This meant that the proletarian revolution could not hope to succeed and survive in backward Russia without the support of the mass of poor peasants.

The soviets, which had previously arisen in the 1905 Revolution, were revived in the February Revolution, but they now included soldiers, who were mainly peasants and who would otherwise have been difficult to organise. Soldiers' soviets became the organised form of the armed military units that were now at the disposal of the working class.

Viktor Bulla

Troops fire on workers demonstration during Petrograd July Days.

Between February and October there was continual conflict between the Provisional Government and the soviets. Describing the instability of dual power, the first minister of war in the Provisional Government, Alexander Guchkov, complained: "The government, alas, has no real power; the troops, the railroads, the post and telegraph are in the hands of the Soviet. The simple fact is that the Provisional Government exists only so long as the Soviet permits it" (quoted in *History of the Russian Revolution*, Leon Trotsky. 1930). Dual power could only be resolved either by revolution or counterrevolution.

With the overthrow of the autocratic rule of the tsar, democratic illusions became widespread. Upon his return from exile in the spring of 1917 Lenin described Russia as the "freest of all the belligerent countries in the world," and there was freedom of expression and intense public debate, especially in the soviets about the way forward for the revolution. But the fundamental nature of Russia as an imperialist power had not changed and for Lenin, the question was to maintain the Bolsheviks' revolutionary defeatist position on WWI—the task remained that of "turning the imperialist war into a civil war."

The soviets in February were dominated by the SRs and Mensheviks, who maintained that the February Revolution had achieved the main task of overthrowing the monarchy and now the task was to defend "democratic" Russia against German imperialism. In other words the war aims of the Russian bourgeoisie would continue. During Lenin's exile the Bolshevik leaders in Russia began to bend in the direction of the Mensheviks' defensism. Trotsky was scathing in his *History of the Russian Revolution* about a *Pravda* article in early March which said: "Our slogan is pressure upon the Provisional Government with the aim of compelling it...to make an attempt to induce all the warring countries to open immediate negotiations...and until then every man remains at his fighting post!" Lenin vehemently opposed this line in *Pravda*, saying in a March letter: "I shall prefer even an immediate split with anyone in our party, whoever it may be, to making concessions to the social-patriotism of Kerensky and Co."

Lenin Fights to Rearm the Party

On his return to Russia in April, Lenin led a sharp fight to reorient the Bolshevik Party. Few events had such significance for the fate of the revolution as the Bolshevik Party conferences held in April, where the issue at stake was the question of the working class taking power. As Trotsky noted in *Lessons of October* (1924): "The fundamental controversial question, around which everything else centred, was this: whether or not we should struggle for power; whether or not we should assume power."

Lenin's "April Theses" make clear that not the slightest concession to "revolutionary defensism" is permissible. He abandoned his slogan of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" in favour of a direct struggle for proletarian power. Lenin's theses included a recognition that the seizure of power by the proletariat would place on the order of the day not only the democratic tasks in Russia, but also the socialist tasks. Also included was a sweeping programme for nationalising land and banks under a soviet government and the creation of a new revolutionary international.

Even before April Lenin was irreconcilably opposed to class collaboration and to the Russian bourgeoisie. His old slogan had nothing in common with the Mensheviks, whose programme was that the Russian Revolution needed to be led by the bourgeoisie and supported by the proletariat, for a period of years or decades. In contrast Lenin saw the vital necessity for the peasants, who needed to rise up and overthrow the landlords, to ally with the proletariat in the coming revolution. He also saw the revolution in Russia as the opening shot in the European and international revolution. But Lenin's formula for a joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry was flawed, not least because the peasantry is not an independent class but an atomised petty-bourgeois layer.

Faced with the reality of dual power Lenin fought for the same programmatic conclusions as Trotsky advocated in his theory of "permanent revolution." From 1905 Trotsky understood that the realisation of the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in backward Russia was conceivable only under the dictatorship of the proletariat, leaning on the peasantry. Moreover, the seizure of power by the working class in Russia would place on the order of the day not only democratic, but also socialist tasks. This would give a powerful impetus to international socialist revolution, which was necessary for the development of socialism in Russia. Trotsky in turn came over to Lenin on the party question, making clear on his return to Russia in May 1917 that he no longer favoured unity between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

In contrast to both Lenin and Trotsky, the right wing in the Bolshevik Party at the time—exemplified by Kamenev—still had in mind a consolidation of the new bourgeois democracy. Kamenev and Zinoviev would oppose the seizure of power in October.

Fake Socialists Join the Kerensky Government

When the SRs and Mensheviks openly joined the Provisional Government in May, this was a political betrayal of the working masses in the soviets, but entirely in keeping with the SR and Menshevik programme. The Kerensky government was a bourgeois government; the presence of the Mensheviks and SRs was designed to fool the workers that their concerns could be met through the bourgeois state. These defensist "socialists" still dominated the soviets and when the All-Russian Congress of Soviets opened in June it voted to approve Kerensky's new offensive at the front.

But the mood in Petrograd was changing in favour of the Bolsheviks. When a demonstration in early June was banned by the Menshevik/SR-led Soviet, the Bolsheviks stood down. The Soviet leadership then called a demonstration on June 18, but the workers came out *en masse* under Bolshevik slogans, including: "Down with the ten capitalist ministers!" "Down with the offensive" and "All power to the soviets!" By the start of July Petrograd was in semi-insurrection—a delegation from a machine gun unit met workers from the Putilov factory to tell them they had received an order on July 4 to go to the front, but had decided instead to go "not to the German front, against the German proletariat, but against their own capitalist ministers."

By June the Bolsheviks had a near majority in the Petrograd factories and in some garrisons but it was far from clear

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VAAP

General Kornilov's troops being disarmed after attempted counterrevolutionary coup in August 1917.

Mexico...

(continued from page 1)

(Spring 2009) that "the massive mobilization of the bourgeois state—a machine of repression that serves the purpose of protecting private property and the regime of the capitalists—has nothing to do with 'protecting' the population; it is a deployment of force to warn the impoverished masses in the face of the brutal economic crisis." This was clearly seen on 10 October 2009 when thousands of federal police and soldiers occupied Mexico City's main electricity plant in order to smash the union, which was an obstacle to the attempt to privatize the electrical industry (see the GEM leaflet reprinted in "Defend SME Electrical Workers Union!" *WV* No. 945, 23 October 2009).

The labor movement on both sides of the border must oppose the "war on drugs," "war on terror" and other campaigns that aim to bolster the capitalist state's repressive powers. In Mexico, even though it is the raids against the big-name traffickers in their mansions that grab the headlines, the drug wars have meant the sowing of murderous terror in poor neighborhoods throughout the country, like Tepito in downtown Mexico City, a favorite target for police raids. In the United States, the "war on drugs" has for decades served the racist capitalist rulers in carrying out the mass incarceration of black people and, increasingly, Latinos and immigrants.

The Spartacist League/U.S. and the GEM, sections of the International Communist League, call for the ***decriminalization of drugs***. We oppose all laws against "crimes without victims"—from drug use to prostitution, gambling and pornography—which at bottom serve to maintain social order on behalf of the capitalist ruling class. By removing the superprofits that come with the illegal, underground nature of the drug trade, decriminalization would also reduce the crime and other social pathology associated with it.

As Marxists, we also oppose measures by the bourgeois state that restrict or prevent the population from bearing arms. In the U.S., the Democratic Party in particular has for years sought to restrict this right, which is supposed to be guaranteed by the Second Amendment to the Constitution. Hysteria about Mexican drug violence is now being wielded to go after gun dealerships in Arizona and Texas that purportedly arm the cartels, despite the fact that these mom-and-pop operations are hardly the places where the *narcotraficantes* are getting the grenade launchers, antitank rockets and other military-grade hardware they use! In Mexico, where gun control is much more stringent, the drug wars serve as a pretext to further clamp down on the population's rights. Gun control laws are meant to ensure that the army, police and criminals—often one and the same—have a monopoly on arms. No to gun control!

"Drug Wars": Made in U.S.A.

Under both Democratic and Republican administrations, U.S. imperialism has used the "war on drugs" as a means to increase its grip on its Latin American "backyard." "Plan Colombia," begun in 2000, funneled billions of dollars to the blood-drenched Colombian government, whose murderous campaign against leftist guerrillas was long wrapped in the "anti-drugs" banner. With both the Pentagon and CIA railing that the drug trade threatens to turn Mexico into a "failed state," the U.S. has increased military aid to Mexico by a factor of *seven* through the $1.4 billion "Plan Mérida." Initiated under George W. Bush, the program has been continued and supplemented under Barack Obama, who made a point of traveling to Mexico last spring, as did Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, to lecture Calderón about his handling of the crisis. Down with Plan Mérida and all U.S. military aid to Mexico!

The Obama administration has also seized upon the hysteria over drugs to further tighten the border with Mexico. The economic recession that has thrown millions of both native- and foreign-born workers out of their jobs in the U.S. has also resulted in a sharp decrease in both legal and undocumented immigration. Meanwhile, the administration has boosted the number of Border Patrol agents and is stepping up the deportation of imprisoned "illegal" aliens. Along with anti-black racism, anti-immigrant chauvinism has long been wielded by the capitalist rulers to divide the working class and weaken its struggles against exploitation. We demand: Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! No deportations!

While Washington spokesmen decry the chaos wrought by the drug wars, it is the imperialist economic domination of Mexico that laid the basis for the spiraling violence. Beginning in the 1980s, the International Monetary Fund and other imperialist agencies dictated "debt restructuring" programs to Mexico and throughout the Third World that axed agricultural subsidies as well as social welfare programs. The effect was to wreck small agricultural production, touching off a massive influx of ruined peasants to the cities, creating a fertile ground for the rise of the drug trade and other sectors of the "informal economy."

This trend qualitatively accelerated with the imposition of the NAFTA "free trade" agreement. In the 16 years since NAFTA was signed, the Mexican countryside has been devastated, including through the removal of protection against U.S.-produced corn and beans, the mainstays of the diet of the poor and the key staples grown by poor peasants. In Ciudad Juárez and other areas along the border, many peasants sought work in "free trade" *maquiladora* plants, where U.S. and other manufacturers pay miserable wages. But for most of those who came into the cities, finding work was hopeless. Furthermore, the current recession has severely restricted the traditional safety valve of migration to the U.S., and remittances from Mexicans living in *el Norte* —a major source of foreign currency and a lifeline for millions, especially in the countryside—have plummeted.

Under these circumstances, in much of rural Mexico, and especially for indigenous communities in the most remote and arid regions, drug cultivation provides the only source of livelihood. As an article in the *Nation* (3 August 2009) put it, "Today, with remittances, oil prices and tourism depressed, the narco trade is probably Mexico's largest single earner of hard currency."

As the NAFTA "free trade" rape of Mexico was being negotiated nearly 20 years ago, the SL/U.S. issued a joint statement with the GEM and the Trotskyist League of Canada that declared: "There is a burning need for an *internationalist* proletarian opposition which stands with the working class and impoverished peasantry of Mexico against the imperialist assault. The Canadian, U.S. and Mexican sections of the International Communist League are dedicated to building a revolutionary vanguard that can unite the working masses of the continent in common class struggle" (*WV* No. 530, 5 July 1991).

This proletarian internationalist perspective stands in sharp contrast to the pro-imperialist U.S. and Canadian labor bureaucracies, whose opposition to NAFTA was based on chauvinist protectionism. It also stands in opposition to the nationalist populism pushed by the Mexican trade-union misleaders, which ties the workers to the Mexican bourgeoisie. Mexico's small reformist left follows suit, mainly through its support to the bourgeois PRD. Key to the emancipation of the proletariat on both sides of the Río Bravo (Rio Grande) is the fight for its political independence from all bourgeois parties.

The only road to the liberation of Mexico's impoverished urban and rural masses is that of permanent revolution—the perspective laid out by Leon Trotsky, co-leader with V. I. Lenin of the Bolshevik Party that led the October 1917 proletarian revolution in Russia. To solve the tasks of agrarian revolution and all-around social and economic modernization requires the seizure of power by Mexico's proletariat at the head of all the exploited and oppressed. Expropriating the agricultural and industrial capitalists, a Mexican workers and peasants government would lay the basis for building a planned economy and would immediately face the need to extend socialist revolution to the U.S. imperialist colossus.

The emancipation of the working class and the oppressed in Mexico is indissolubly linked to that of workers in the U.S., where the millions of immigrants from Mexico and elsewhere are a key component of the multiracial proletariat. This underscores the crucial need to build Leninist-Trotskyist parties throughout the Americas, as part of the fight to reforge the Fourth International.

Reuters

Tens of thousands of unionized electrical workers and their supporters protest against closure of Mexico City power plant, October 2009.

Reuters

February 13: Demonstrators protest against drug violence in Ciudad Juárez, demand resignation of President Calderón. Military deployment has led to increased bloodletting, repression of workers and poor.

Narcoviolencia and State Terror

While brutally enforcing the imperialists' economic dictates, Mexico's capitalist rulers became increasingly tied into the booming drug trade. The regime of Carlos Salinas (1988-94), the second-to-last presidency of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), was marked by corruption that was blatant even by Mexican standards and a shift from the traditional populism that marked decades of PRI rule. Along with the privatization of key sectors of the economy, Mexico was swept by drug-related corruption. During Salinas's first year in office, his national police chief was found with $2.4 million in drug money in the trunk of his car. Beginning with the Salinas family itself, politicians moved closer to the drug lords, who were becoming more powerful as Pablo Escobar's Medellin Cartel in Colombia was being destroyed.

The institutionalization of drug-related corruption under the PRI actually served to control the kind of violence that has swept through Mexico in recent years. But the situation changed after the right-wing clerical PAN under Vicente Fox came to power in 2000 and Washington began to put intense pressure on the Mexican government to crack down on the drug trade. In his term of office, nearly 80,000 people were arrested on drug trafficking charges, most of them low-level dealers but also 15 cartel leaders, scores of "lieutenants" and 428 *sicarios* (hit men). In going after the cartels, Fox began extraditing Mexican citizens to the U.S., something that had been anathema to the PRI nationalists. The campaign destroyed the equilibrium between the different cartels and also between them and the government, touching off increasingly violent clashes.

Many of those killed in the drug violence have been agents of the government—policemen, soldiers, etc.—who hired themselves out to one or another cartel. Even before the current drug wars, Mexican police commonly moonlighted as criminal enforcers or kidnappers. Now each cartel boasts its own paramilitary force with sophisticated weaponry and professionally trained leadership. Like the infamous Los Zetas, these forces are recruited from elite soldiers and police squads. (The cartels pay much more than the government.)

Mexico's rulers have marshaled the fears and outrage among the population over the drug wars into support for increased repression, including further cracking down on democratic rights. For

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Calderón, the "war" against the drug trade has also provided a chance to purge the government apparatus by installing PAN cronies in place of PRI leftovers.

It is the bourgeois state that is the biggest force for violence. While the cops in Mexico—and not only in Mexico—are plenty corrupt, the brutal violence they employ stems from the role they play, along with the military, courts and prisons, as a core component of the capitalist state. This murderous apparatus of repression cannot be reformed to act in the interest of the workers and the poor. It must be smashed through socialist revolution and replaced with a new state to impose working-class rule—the dictatorship of the proletariat—to expropriate and suppress the capitalist exploiters.

Ciudad Juárez: City Under Siege

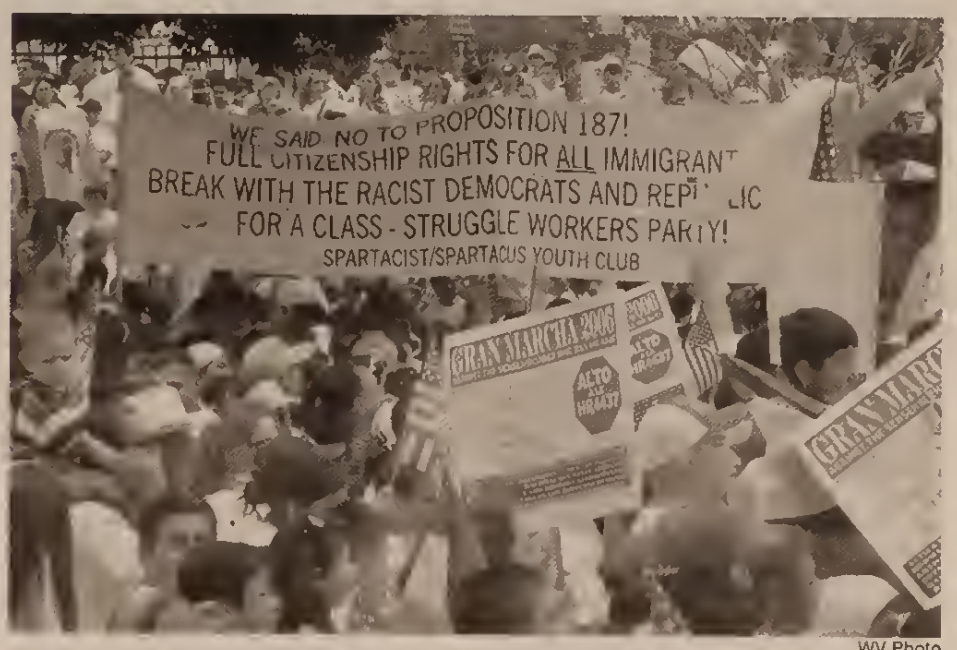
The key staging ground for Calderón's drug war is Ciudad Juárez, an important industrial city of 1.5 million people whose scores of *maquiladoras* have attracted thousands of migrants from the interior of Mexico. Long infamous for the unsolved brutal murders of hundreds of young women workers (see "Capitalism and Anti-Woman Terror," *WV* No. 812, 24 October 2003), Juárez is also a key locus of the drug trade due to its proximity to the U.S.—across the border from El Paso. *Narco News Bulletin* online (17 April 2009) described the army's "Joint Operation Juárez" as a "situation of de facto martial law" in which the planned deployment of 8,500 soldiers and 2,300 militarized police amounted to one officer for every 130 residents, and about 92 troops per square mile. The article reported:

> "Soldiers have disarmed 380 transit police and will accompany them as they carry out their duties. Thirteen current and retired military officers have taken control of Juarez's police force: Ret. Gen. Julian David Rivera Breton, who made a name for himself in Chiapas when he was one of the military officials in charge of anti-Zapatista operations there, is the new police commissioner."

The troops are scheduled to stay until at least December. The new police officers, replacing those purged, were trained in urban combat at an army base and will carry military-issue German-made assault rifles.

The workers and poor of Juárez are direct targets of the military deployment. As of last June, the Chihuahua State Human Rights Commission was looking into *2,500* reported torture cases involving military personnel and federal police. Longtime activist Géminis Ochoa, leader of the Che Guevara Street Vendors Union, was killed in the midst of organizing a demonstration against the army's abuse of vendors. At least seven university professors have been murdered; all were involved in labor or social activism. Last May, Dr. Manuel Arroyo Galván, a professor of sociology at the Autonomous University of Ciudad Juárez active around the rights of *maquiladora* workers, was shot six times in the head in downtown Juárez.

Mexico, like other Latin American countries dependent on U.S. imperialism, has never been a stable bourgeois democracy. Its military (the third-largest in Latin America) is not primarily designed for foreign combat but to repress the population, as the 15-year-long campaign against the Zapatistas in Chiapas makes clear. However, unlike in much of Latin America, the Mexican army has done the bidding of the civilian government since the end of the Mexican Revolution. Under the PRI, the state's bloody arm was seen in the killing or disappearance of thousands of leftists, militant workers and peasants. In the Tlatelolco massacre of 2 October 1968, government forces killed some 1,000 student protesters in Mexico City. In the broader *guerra sucia* (dirty war) against the left from the late 1960s through the early 1980s, at least 2,000 people were disappeared or killed. Today the Mexican ruling class faces little threat from the left, which mainly operates under the PRD's umbrella.



WV Photo

Spartacist banner at L.A. demonstration for immigrant rights, March 2006.

The dramatically increased role the military is now playing will only expand the numbers of victims of state terror. Army officers have been put in charge of several local or state police forces. Troops man checkpoints on the streets and highways while soldiers patrol cities in trucks with automatic weapons pointed at all and sundry. Many cities under occupation are industrial centers with histories of militant workers struggles. Army abuses—including illegal searches and arrest without cause, rape, sexual abuse, torture and death—reported to the National Human Rights Commission have surged from 182 in 2006, when Calderón deployed the military, to 1,230 in 2008. When residents of Monterrey, Ciudad Juárez, Nuevo Laredo, Reynosa and Veracruz protested against the military last year, they were denounced in the bourgeois media as being tools of the cartels.

Frontera NorteSur (4 September 2009), an Internet journal published by New Mexico State University at Las Cruces, noted, "As the body count mounts, the violence increasingly resembles the 'social cleansing' carried out by death squads in Honduras, Brazil and other Latin American nations." Critics of the government and social activists have been among those targeted. Journalists in the north of Mexico are regularly intimidated and threatened for exposing government corruption. In southern Mexico, supporters of the Zapatistas have been tortured under the pretext of the drug war, as have indigenous activists in Guerrero, a state long known for murderous state repression against leftists. *Proceso* magazine (22 March 2009) called the permanently militarized areas in that state a "counterinsurgency strategy camouflaged as federal action against the cultivation of drugs." Elsewhere in Mexico, rumors have circulated about vigilante groups linked to the police, an ominous echo of the *guerra sucia*.

No Illusions in PRD Populism!

The "war on drugs" has been endorsed by politicians across the spectrum of bourgeois politics in Mexico. Harking back to when the country's rulers offered some social programs and populist rhetoric along with brute force, leading PRDers like López Obrador blame the violence and chaos on Mexican neoliberal regimes, especially those of the PAN, for their corruption and gutting of state institutions. But when a rumor circulated that traffickers were planning to kill Calderón, the PRD closed ranks behind the Commander-in-Chief, with Senate PRD leader Carlos Navarrette declaring that "the Mexican state must make use of all its resources and strength" (*El Imparcial*, Hermosillo, 11 August 2009). The PRD has for a number of years carried out the "war on drugs" in Mexico City—for example, the raids in Tepito.

Echoing the reactionary anti-drug hysteria is the reformist Militante group, cothinkers of the International Marxist Tendency of the late Ted Grant. When the government was planning to lessen penalties for possession of small portions of drugs—a supportable if minimal reform—Militante denounced Calderón from the right, claiming in a 2 May 2009 article on its Web site that "the PAN governments have tried to legalize drugs with the objective of undermining the political and organizational capacity of the Mexican youth." This is of a piece with the Grantites' long history of retrograde social positions internationally, including hailing anti-drug vigilantism in France, where black African and North African youth are specially targeted by the cops (see the 1994 Spartacist pamphlet, *Militant Labour's Touching Faith in the Capitalist State*).

In the U.S., *International Socialist Review* (July/August 2009), published by the International Socialist Organization (ISO), opined that through decriminalization, "The billions of dollars wasted on the war on drugs in Mexico could go to rebuild the Mexican economy in order to provide the education and jobs that the Mexican people so desperately need. In the United States, the money could be put toward drug treatment instead of incarceration." One might think that the ISO was smoking some peculiar stuff here. But the dream that the imperialists who ruthlessly exploit workers at home and abroad and their bagmen south of the border would open jail-cell doors and "rebuild" an economy they systematically loot is illustrative of reformism's entire framework: the notion that the bourgeois state can be pressured to serve the interests of the exploited and the oppressed.

The ISO's reformist plea was a faint echo of the plan offered by the PRD's López Obrador, who appealed last March in an open letter to Hillary Clinton: "We think that it is a mistake to confront the problem of the lack of safety and of violence with an iron hand, with the military, with jails, with more severe laws and longer prison terms. The solution to the scourge of criminal behavior must come by retaking control of the state, by changing the current economic model and by guaranteeing better living and working conditions to the population."

Bourgeois-populist parties like the PRD *cannot* fundamentally better the living and working conditions of the workers and peasants. When in power, their job is to administer the capitalist profit system and enforce its needs against the working people, occasionally adding some social programs to try to maintain class peace. And when faced with workers, students and others fighting for their rights and livelihoods, the PRD no less than the PRI and PAN uses organized state violence.

Offered as an alternative to neoliberalism, populist appeals serve to reinforce the chains binding the combative Mexican proletariat to the capitalist order. By preaching the common interests of "the people," populist nationalism obscures the irreconcilable class divide between the working class and the bourgeoisie that exploits its labor for profit. As the GEM wrote in defending the SME electrical workers union:

> "The proletariat has unique class interests and enormous social power based on its role in the productive process; this means it is called upon to play the leading role in championing the aspirations of all the poor and oppressed through its own emancipation and the establishment of a workers and peasants government. The working class does not lack the will to fight; but as long as it remains dominated by the politics of bourgeois nationalist populism, it will be derailed towards illusions in the democratic reform of capitalism."

The GEM fights to break militant workers and radical youth from the PRD and all forms of bourgeois nationalism. As the North American sections of the ICL, the GEM, SL/U.S. and TLC are dedicated to the struggle to forge Trotskyist workers parties that will lead the fight for socialist revolution from the Yukon to the Yucatán.■

Chicago...

(continued from page 3)

The bosses are now gunning for the public sector unions. Daley has already forced most city unions to accept unpaid furlough days, and those that did not were hit with layoffs and reduced hours. The unemployment rate in Chicago has spiked over 10 percent. Economic times are tough. But it is necessary to fight; not fighting will only assure greater misery in the future. The solid six-day transit strike in Philadelphia last November held off the worst of an offensive by the transit bosses and local Democrats, although the union misleaders gave ground on the key issue of pensions.

The ATU bureaucrats sell the lie that effective labor action, including strikes, is impossible or illegal. During an earlier CTA "doomsday" budget crisis in 2007, these misleaders helped foist a rotten binding arbitration contract on the workforce, burying the union's strike weapon. In fact, the unions were built through class struggle, often in defiance of bourgeois law and the capitalist state—the cops, courts and military—that enforces it. The way forward lies in replacing the bureaucrats with a class-struggle leadership in the unions.

In the lead-up to the February 7 cuts, there were rallies outside CTA headquarters on January 18 and 20. ATU officials participated in the January 20 rally with only a token presence of workers. The earlier rally was organized by a host of reformist "socialist" groups—including the International Socialist Organization (ISO), Socialist Alternative (SAlt), and the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) and its front groups "NoCTAcuts.org" and ANSWER Chicago. The strategy presented at both rallies was the same: pressuring the racist capitalist rulers for a few more crumbs for working people.

Along these lines, the PSL rolled out a variation of their usual slogan of "Money for jobs, not for war" while other leftist fakers (ISO, SAlt) endorsed the January 18 demonstration, which included the call to "Tax the rich, not working people." The aim of such reformist pipe dreams is to conceal the reality that the bourgeois state and its political representatives exist to defend capitalist rule and profit, not to provide for the well-being of the downtrodden.

Like the trade-union bureaucrats, whom they serve as water boys, the reformists determine their politics by what is "practical" under capitalism. In their drive for ever-greater profits, the capitalist rulers have looted the wealth of this country, sabotaged its vital infrastructure and unleashed the catastrophe of joblessness. The capitalist system deserves to perish. As our comrade at the November 3 public hearing observed, until the working class takes control of the resources of this society, "we are not going to have a just and rational society." He concluded: "And in order to get there, we've got to have a workers party to fight against this capitalist system, a workers party to fight for a workers government."■

1917...

(continued from page 7)

that this support existed in the countryside or at the front. On more than one occasion in July the Bolsheviks had to restrain the workers in Petrograd from taking power because, without support in the countryside, they risked losing power again. After initially opposing the July demonstrations, the Bolshevik leadership decided that it was better to go with them. And when this wave broke, a period of severe counterrevolutionary repression followed. Bolsheviks were killed; Trotsky was arrested and Lenin went into hiding. The repression however was useful in helping the workers to understand the true nature of the supposedly "democratic" government of Kerensky, the Mensheviks and the SRs, which was in fact the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The Mensheviks and SRs emerged discredited from the July Days, whereas the Bolshevik Party emerged with increased support. The credibility of the Bolsheviks would also be enhanced by their role in the Kornilov episode that was to follow.

Military Defense Against Kornilov; No Political Support to Kerensky

Kornilov, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, was a monarchist general of the "Black Hundred" type (Great Russian chauvinists who carried out pogroms against Jews). When he attempted a coup in August, the Bolsheviks quickly mobilised workers from the Petrograd factories to repulse him, in contrast to Kerensky who would have sat back while Petrograd was invaded. A victory for Kornilov would have meant not only a slaughter of the Bolsheviks and the workers and soldiers in the soviets but would also have been fatal for many of the compromisers as well. The failed coup by Kornilov showed that bourgeois democracy, as represented by the Provisional Government, was not viable in the historic sense in Russia in 1917. The real choices were represented by the Bolsheviks on one hand, and Kornilov and the forces of reaction on the other.

The Bolsheviks formed a *military* bloc with Kerensky against Kornilov, but gave him no *political* support. In fact they used the military bloc as a way of undermining Kerensky's remaining political support. When Kronstadt sailors asked Trotsky if they shouldn't arrest the government, he replied: "No, not yet.... Use Kerensky as a gun-rest to shoot Kornilov. Afterwards, we will settle with Kerensky." Putting it another way he said Kerensky and Kornilov were "two variants of one and the same danger...the one chronic and the other acute" and one must: "Ward off the acute danger first, in order afterwards to settle with the chronic one."

Lenin continued to fight against the conciliators in his own party who wanted to use the military bloc with the Provisional Government as an excuse to slide over into a political bloc with the Mensheviks and SRs, leading to a defensist policy on the war. The pressure on the Bolsheviks to adapt to defensism was greatly increased by the German capture of Riga on August 20. A conspiracy was entered into by the Kerensky government and the Anglo-French imperialists to surrender Petrograd to the Germans and in this way to suppress the revolution. Rodzianko, the former head of the State Duma, said: "Petrograd appears threatened" adding "I say, to hell with Petrograd."

Spartacist

International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) banner raised at 1991 demonstration on anniversary of October Revolution in Moscow.

Occupation by the German army would have meant an end to the soviets and to dual power. Baltic sailors had been fighting to protect the approaches to Petrograd, the centre of the revolution, which was necessary. But Lenin was clear that the Bolsheviks must not become defensists, writing: "We shall become defencists *only after* the transfer of power to the proletariat.... Neither the capture of Riga *nor the capture of Petrograd* will make us defencists." From prison, Trotsky said: "The fall of Riga is a cruel blow. The fall of Petersburg would be a misfortune. But the fall of the international policy of the Russian proletariat would be ruinous." The Kornilov coup fizzled by the end of August. The Bolsheviks never abandoned their defeatist posture towards the Russian bourgeois government and even in this tricky situation maintained their internationalism.

Lenin's Fight for the Seizure of State Power

In September the Bolsheviks obtained a majority in the Petrograd Soviet and, unlike in July, Bolshevik support among the masses outside the cities was growing rapidly. With land wars raging in the countryside, in which the peasants were seizing land, Lenin recognised that the time had come for the overthrow of the Kerensky government and the seizure of power by the proletariat. From mid-September on Lenin fought relentlessly to put the insurrection on the order of the day. The task he said was "*armed uprising* in Petrograd and Moscow (with its region), the seizing of power and the overthrow of the government. We must consider *how* to agitate for this without expressly saying as much in the press." The Democratic Conference that took place at this time was a parliamentary diversion from the seizure of power, as was the Pre-Parliament.

The crucial upcoming event was the Second Congress of Soviets, which was very popular with the masses because it was sure to have a Bolshevik majority and which the Mensheviks and SRs kept trying to put off. Trotsky and [Yakov] Sverdlov thought that the seizure of power could coincide with the congress of the soviets; Lenin feared this was a smokescreen for not organising an insurrection, which was understandable given the opposition in the Central Committee to the seizure of power. On October 10 a crucial meeting of the Bolshevik Central Committee, which Lenin managed to attend although he was still in hiding, voted for insurrection by a majority of ten to two. Zinoviev and Kamenev who were against went so far as to publish a letter in Maxim Gorky's newspaper on October 18, a gross breach of discipline that alerted the class enemy to the planned insurrection. Lenin called for their expulsion from the party but they were saved by the revolution itself.

Despite Lenin's worries, an insurrection was in fact being organised through the means of the Military Revolutionary Committee (MRC). The MRC arose from a joint motion by the Mensheviks and SRs to disguise the fact that they were planning to move the Petrograd garrison to the front. To their surprise the Bolsheviks voted for the MRC, knowing they would have a majority in it, and when it was set up the Menshcviks boycotted it. A body that was legally identified with the soviets was an ideal vehicle for the Bolsheviks to prepare the seizure of power under the slogan of defending the upcoming congress of the soviets.

A decisive event towards the seizure of power was when the Petrograd Soviet, at the behest of the Bolsheviks, invalidated an order by Kerensky to transfer two-thirds of the Petrograd garrison to the front. Trotsky noted: "The moment when the regiments, upon the instructions of the Military Revolutionary Committee, refused to depart from the city, we had a victorious insurrection in the capital, only slightly screened at the top by the remnants of the bourgeois-democratic state forms. The insurrection of October 25 was only supplementary in character" (*Lessons of October*).

When the soldiers' section of the Petrograd Soviet voted to transfer authority from army headquarters to the MRC, the Soviet had power in all but name.

The First Proletarian Socialist Revolution

On October 24 Kerensky foolishly tried to shut down the Bolshevik newspaper. The MRC immediately sent a detachment to reopen it and also to start taking over the telephone exchange and other key centres. Even at this point Lenin was frustrated with the lack of progress of the insurrection and went in disguise to Smolny, the Bolshevik headquarters, to oversee preparations personally. The battleship *Aurora* was still firing on the Winter Palace when the Second Congress of Soviets opened.

The October Revolution was no coup d'état. The seizure of power was based on the support of the majority of the proletariat. The actual military plans were not made public, but the masses of workers and soldiers were fully aware that the Bolsheviks intended to take power. Days before the revolution, the Bolsheviks organised rallies throughout Petrograd attended by ***hundreds of thousands*** who knew that the upcoming Congress of Soviets would decide the question of power. Workers raised their hands and dedicated themselves to defence of the proletarian power based on the soviets.

At the opening session of the Congress of Soviets, the Mensheviks and the right-wing SRs were enraged that the Bolsheviks had taken power and walked out, some declaring that they were going to the Winter Palace to die with the Provisional Government. Trotsky vehemently denounced these deserters, saying: "All these so-called Socialist compromisers, these frightened Mensheviki, Socialist Revolutionaries, *Bund*—let them go! They are just so much refuse which will be swept away into the garbage-heap of history!" (quoted in *Ten Days That Shook the World*, John Reed, 1919).

The Bolshevik Party refused to cede power to the conciliators who would hand it back to the bourgeoisie. The Mensheviks and SRs immediately started organising a counterrevolutionary uprising against the Bolsheviks. Based in the Petrograd city Duma, the "All-Russian committee for salvation of the country and the revolution" tried to organise an insurrection using the Cossacks but it was quickly repulsed.

Consistent with their opposition to the seizure of power, the conciliators in the Bolshevik Party leadership around Kamenev argued for a coalition government but they backed down when it became clear that there was nobody to form a coalition with. This layer would re-emerge after Lenin's death and the defeat of the German Revolution of 1923, when a bureaucratic caste began to coalesce around J.V. Stalin in 1923-24.

One particular question that the Mensheviks and SRs seized on was the Bolsheviks' dispersal of the Constituent Assembly after the October Revolution. During the spring and summer of 1917 the Bolsheviks had called for a Constituent Assembly, at a time when the Provisional Government refused to convoke one out of fear of sparking a peasant uprising. After the seizure of power this stage had passed but the Bolsheviks didn't simply call off the elections to it because a Bolshevik majority could have strengthened the authority of the soviets among the backward masses, especially in the countryside. But the election list system did not reflect the dramatic shift towards the Bolsheviks that had taken place in recent months and this, combined with the nature of parliamentary elections, gave the petty bourgeoisie a disproportional weight of the vote. Faced with a Constituent Assembly dominated by the bourgeois Kadets as well as the SRs and Mensheviks, the Bolsheviks rightly demanded that it recognise the soviet power; the assembly refused and it was soon dissolved. I should note that for the good reformists of the SWP the Russian Revolution was all about democracy and so their account is that the Bolsheviks won the masses by promising bread, peace and land. The small detail they leave out is that in order to grant this, all that was needed was the smashing of the bourgeois state and overthrow of the Provisional Government, followed by the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

I want to conclude with Lenin's opening remarks at the second session of the Congress of Soviets. He was met with tumultuous applause. When he spoke, his now-famous words were: "We shall now proceed to construct the socialist order!" There was a three-point agenda: an end to the war, land to the peasants, and establish a socialist dictatorship. One of the tasks that the Bolsheviks proceeded with after the revolution was regrouping revolutionaries across the world into a new international, as a necessary instrument to spread the revolution to the advanced countries of Europe, and to bring about world socialism. Our fight for Leninist-Trotskyist parties worldwide is a continuation of this task.■

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Spying...

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and offered it to a number of journalists and civil liberties organizations. The most receptive response came from EFF lawyers, who were already pulling together a lawsuit against AT&T based on the *Times*'s revelations. The EFF showed Klein's documents to an Internet expert, J. Scott Marcus, who confirmed that the NSA technology was designed to sweep up a massive amount of data and had probably been deployed in 15 or 20 locations, likely diverting "well over half" of AT&T's total domestic wire traffic.

Klein knew it was critical to have his information publicized in order to provide some protection against government and company blowback. As soon as his sworn statement was filed in the EFF suit, AT&T lawyers went to court seeking to gag Klein and force him to return all his evidence on the ground that what he knew constituted "trade secrets" and "state secrets." Vaughn Walker, the conservative judge hearing the EFF case, rejected AT&T's claims, ruling that there were no "secrets" because the cat was already out of the bag—the fact that AT&T had turned over its lines to the NSA was already being widely publicized.

Klein tried without luck to find someone on the intelligence committees in Congress who would investigate the NSA's domestic spying. An attorney for Senator Dianne Feinstein promised to call Klein back, but never did and would not return Klein's calls. In the end, no one in Congress called on Klein to testify about what he knew. Klein also pushed to get his story into the bourgeois media, but the government leaned hard on the press to keep quiet. The *New York Times*, which had sat on the original wiretapping story for over a year, dithered for months before finally running Klein's revelations in April 2006. The *Los Angeles Times* quashed a story based on Klein's revelations after discussions with both the White House and Senator Feinstein's staff! As Klein remarks, "The two of them apparently had no problems discussing my evidence with each other in private, but deliberately kept it from the public's view." To its credit, *Wired.com* published Klein's material on its Web site, and later Klein would be featured on liberal radio and TV shows including *Frontline*, *Countdown* and *Democracy Now!*

NSA: "No Such Agency"

The NSA is by far the largest and at the same time the most secretive of U.S. spy agencies, three times the size of the CIA. It was founded in 1952 by secret order of Democratic president Harry Truman, mainly to spy on the Soviet Union during the Cold War. During the late 1960s and early '70s, the NSA went through a massive expansion as the government targeted radicals, Vietnam antiwar activists and black militants based on "watch lists" of citizens given to the NSA by the FBI, CIA and other agencies. After the Watergate scandal in the early 1970s and under the impact of the social struggles of that period, some of this sordid history was publicly exposed through the investigation and hearings of the Senate's 1975-76 Church Committee.

The spying continued, but with some new window-dressing to add an appearance of legality. In 1978, the Carter administration signed the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), a special secret court to vet requests for "national security" wiretaps. While FISA is often invoked by liberals as a check on the nation's secret police, it has in fact never been anything more than a rubber stamp. In its first 27 years, it denied *only five* of nearly *20,000* wiretap applications!

America's rulers long viewed the telephone companies as a key military "asset." Klein recounts how the high-rise AT&T building on Thomas Street in Manhattan, which was built in 1974, "was reputedly designed for nuclear war and evoked a gloomy Kafkaesque world: There were no windows, as the outside was clad in giant pink granite slabs, while the internal structure had tons of reinforced concrete and, said the rumors, special shielding against the electromagnetic pulse from high-altitude nuclear detonations that could fry unprotected electronics and electrical equipment." As far back as 1919, Western Union handed over to a secret government spy outfit called the Black Chamber all international cables sent by foreign embassies in Washington.

WV Pholo

Oakland, February 2002: Labor-centered, united-front mobilization initiated by Partisan Defense Committee and Labor Black League against government's "war on terror" and in defense of immigrant rights.

The NSA was already pressuring the telephone companies to open up their lines in early 2001, *before* the September 11 attacks. Former Qwest CEO Joseph Nacchio has disclosed that in February 2001 Qwest lost its bid for a fat government contract after he refused the NSA's demands for access to Qwest's customer calling records and to install monitoring equipment on the phone lines.

By the time that Room 641A was being built, the Bush administration was launching the notorious Total Information Awareness (TIA) program, run by convicted Contragate criminal John Poindexter. As Poindexter put it, the TIA would give the government "instant access to information from Internet mail and calling records to credit card and banking transactions and travel documents, without a search warrant" (*New York Times*, 9 November 2002). TIA prompted a public outcry, and Congress made a show of cutting off funding for it, but TIA's methods simply migrated to the NSA and other agencies. One NSA program, "Novel Intelligence from Massive Data" (NIMD), is based on software called the Glass Box, which tracks and mimics the techniques of human NSA analysts. In his 2008 book, *The Shadow Factory*, James Bamford explained that NIMD aims to allow computers to crunch the data in all of our computer records in order to "create a society where everyone's words and actions would be screened by secret surveillance machines programmed to watchlist anyone who matches a complex algorithm created by a secret agency."

The NSA's data feeds into the government's digital "clearinghouse" of potential "terrorists," called the Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE), which has grown to *over half a million* names. Nonetheless, in the aftermath of the Christmas 2009 "underwear bomber" incident, President Obama has fretted that the government's spy agencies are still not doing enough "to connect the dots" and demanded that the "no fly" list be expanded even further.

Down With the "War on Terror"!

Wiring Up the Big Brother Machine vividly illustrates the role of the Democratic Party in endorsing the NSA's warrantless data sweeps. In 2007 and 2008, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate leader Harry Reid were instrumental in getting Congress to pass legislation in support of Bush's executive orders authorizing the NSA wiretaps and also giving the phone companies immunity from lawsuits for their part in the surveillance.

In November 2007, Klein went to Washington with the EFF to help lobby against these laws, and again was given the cold shoulder by the Congressional Democratic leadership. The notable exception was Connecticut Senator Christopher Dodd, who made a point of reading Klein's evidence into the Congressional Record from the Senate floor as part of an unsuccessful filibuster to stop the wiretap legislation.

Whatever objections Congressional Democrats raised when the extent of the domestic spying program became clear during the last years of the Bush administration, they were mainly over the unfocused character of the NSA spying operations. Such objections had the character of the corrupt police chief in the movie *Casablanca* who suddenly announces he is "shocked" to find gambling going on in Rick's café. Far from having been a plot by the Bush gang, government spying on the population—be it by the NSA, FBI, CIA or other such agencies, past and present—has been carried out by Republican and Democratic administrations alike.

Contrary to the claims of reformist "socialists" and liberals that Barack Obama would represent some kind of "change" from the Bush regime, Obama made clear in his presidential campaign that he supported the shredding of civil liberties. After his swearing in as imperialist Commander-in-Chief in January 2009, his Justice Department asked Judge Walker to dismiss the EFF suit against AT&T on the ground that AT&T was only doing what the government asked it to do. "In effect," as Klein notes, "Congress had endorsed the infamous Nuremberg defense at the postwar trials of Nazi war criminals who said that they were 'just following orders'."

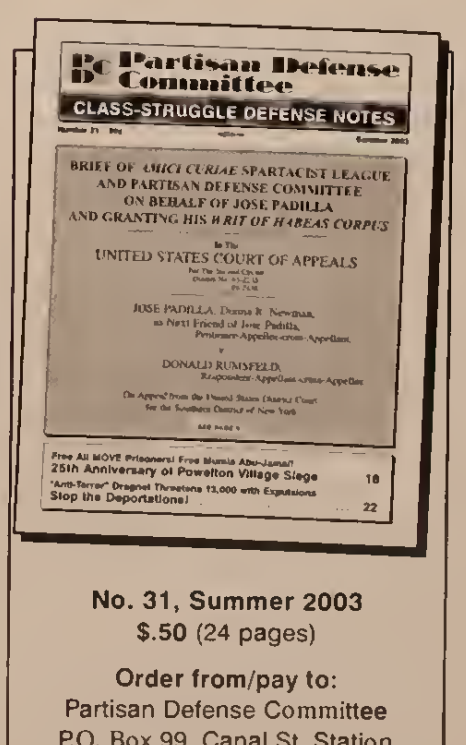
While the Bush administration was brazen and open about its attacks on the Bill of Rights, the Democrats prefer that domestic spying be done behind closed doors, like the FBI's "black bag" break-ins during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations in the 1960s. In fact, it was during the administration of Democrat Bill Clinton that the ground was laid for Bush's attacks on civil liberties. In the 1990s, the NSA had already begun scanning international e-mails without warrants through its Echelon program. In response to the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing of a federal office building, Clinton launched an assault on immigrant rights, including secret trials, while virtually eliminating the right of *habeas corpus* appeals for death row inmates.

Just as the Democrats were up to their necks in the Bush administration's program of open torture—with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi getting a 2002 "virtual tour" of CIA detention sites that included descriptions of waterboarding and other torture techniques—they have also been neck deep in the government's internal spying programs. The Democrats have always been staunch supporters of the "war on terror," voting for the USA Patriot Act and other attacks on democratic rights. Indeed, both capitalist parties aim to cow the population into accepting blatant attacks on their rights as necessary for "national security." The difference between the Democrats and Republicans is not what they do, but how they do it. With their posture as friends of labor and minorities, the Democrats have generally been the bourgeoisie's preferred party of war, better equipped than the Republicans to sell U.S. imperialism's atrocities as exercises in "human rights" and "democracy."

An important pillar of support to the government's shredding of democratic rights has been the defense of the reactionary "war on terror" by the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy, including the CWA's leadership. In his book, Klein notes how the CWA "originated in the 1930s as a literal company union which evolved into one that was forced to actually lead strikes for better pay, benefits, and just plain respect from the arrogant management." Part of the CWA bureaucracy's sordid history included playing an important role in U.S. imperialism's Cold War drive against the Soviet Union. For example, the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD)—which worked with the CIA to destroy militant, left-led unions, especially in Latin America—was the brainchild of Joe Beirne, the CWA's longtime president.

Whether carried out by Democrats or Republicans, the extensive attacks on the population's civil liberties serve to strengthen the apparatus of the capitalist state, which at its core is a machinery of repression and violence against those the bourgeois rulers exploit and oppress. *Wiring Up the Big Brother Machine... And Fighting It* is an important contribution in exposing the government's spying apparatus, which the working class has every interest in opposing. As we wrote in "Government Wiretapping: Big Brother Is Listening" (*WV* No. 909, 29 February 2008):

> "What the government is able to get away with will ultimately be determined by the level of social struggle. What is necessary is a fight to forge a new, class-struggle leadership in the labor movement. This must be linked to the fight to build a revolutionary, multiracial workers party that acts as the tribune of the people and stands for the political independence of the working class against the capitalist state and its parties—an internationalist beacon, capable of mobilizing the social power of the proletariat on behalf of all the oppressed. In the course of such political struggle, we seek to win the working class to the understanding that only a fight to smash the capitalist state through socialist revolution and to establish workers rule can emancipate labor and rid the planet of the horrors of U.S. imperialism."■



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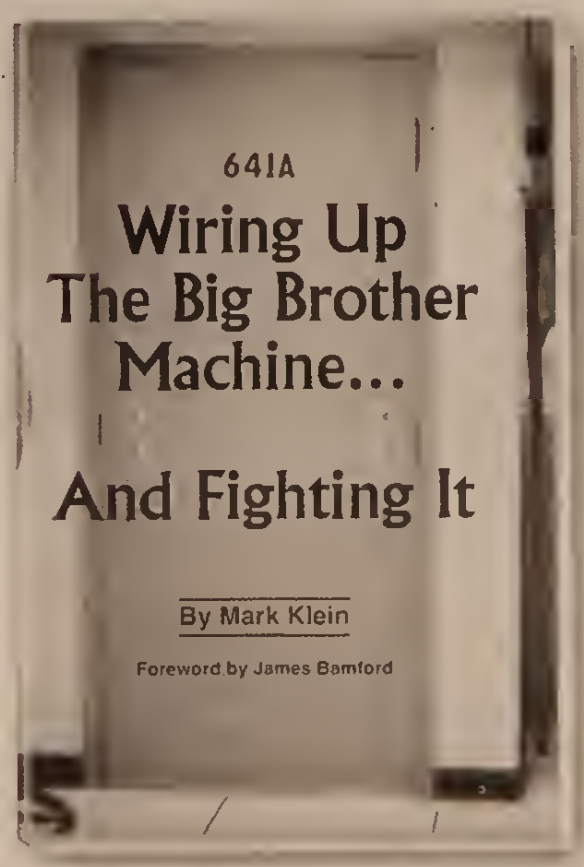
WORKERS VANGUARD

Phone Worker Exposes Government Spying Network



A Review by John Perry

Every time you send an e-mail or a text message, search Google or read a Web page, there is a good chance that National Security Agency (NSA) computers are tracking you, all as part of the government's "war on terror." In Utah and Texas, the NSA is building data warehouses as big as small towns to house copies of literally *trillions* of private citizens' Internet posts and downloads. According to American intelligence expert James Bamford, whose 1982 book *The Puzzle Palace* was the first major account of the NSA, "once vacuumed up and stored in these near-infinite 'libraries,' the data are then analyzed by powerful infoweapons, supercomputers running complex algorithmic programs, to determine who among us may be—or may one day become—a terrorist" (*New York Review of Books*, 5 November 2009).

That we know the extent of the government's massive cybersnooping is largely thanks to retired Bay Area AT&T worker Mark Klein. In 2006, Klein came forward with detailed revelations of how the NSA had tapped into AT&T's fiber-optic Internet cables to offload a copy of the entire data flow. Klein's revelations became Exhibit A in a civil liberties lawsuit filed by the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) to expose and stop the illegal government data mining. The upshot was that Congress stepped in to *bless* the NSA wiretaps in 2007 and 2008, killing the EFF lawsuit with bipartisan support, including from then-Senator Barack Obama.

Last year, Klein published his own account of how he discovered the NSA spying operation. His short book, *Wiring Up the Big Brother Machine...And Fighting It*, details his courageous efforts to bring the snooping operations to light, and the government's counterattack to keep the lid on the story and keep the wiretaps running. *Wiring Up the Big Brother Machine*, which contains a foreword by James Bamford, is a fascinating and chilling read that details the collusion between the NSA and the telecommunications industry in spying on the population.

The NSA's wholesale downloading of telecom traffic is a graphic example of how the capitalist rulers have used the "war on terror" domestically to target whomever they want as a potential "terrorist." Abroad, the "war on terror" has been a pretext for imperialist rampage, from the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq to the aerial bombardment of Pakistan. In our 2003 *amici curiae* (friends of the court) brief on behalf of Jose Padilla, a U.S. citizen seized and detained by the government as an "enemy combatant," the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee described the "war on terror": "Like the 'war against communism' and the 'war against drugs,' this 'war' is a pretext to increase the state's police powers and repressive apparatus, constricting the democratic rights of the population."

We have repeatedly warned that the repressive measures enacted in the wake of the September 11 attacks, initially directed at Muslims and immigrants, would lead to an assault on political dissent and the rights of all, particularly those of black people and the labor movement. As Marxists, we expect that the capitalist state, whether administered by Democrats or Republicans, will continue to eavesdrop on what the rulers term "persons of interest"—not least those who oppose the blood-soaked capitalist order and its brutal repression. Illegal or not, spying, harassment and repression are the norm for the capitalist state, which exists to defend capitalist rule and profits. As we wrote in "NSA/FBI Spying and the War on Our Rights" (*WV* No. 861, 6 January 2006): "Short of the overthrow of capitalist rule, none of the rights and gains that working people hold dear are secure. What's needed is a thoroughgoing socialist revolution led by a multiracial workers party to establish the rule of the working class and usher in a society based on production for human needs not profit."

Secret Room 641A

At the time of the September 11 attacks, Klein worked in downtown San Francisco as an AT&T technician. He was a Communications Workers of America (CWA) unionist with over 20 years experience who had walked the picket lines during phone strikes in 1983 and 1986. One day in 2002, Klein and his co-workers got a company e-mail saying that an NSA agent would be coming to their workplace. Klein, who had been a Vietnam antiwar activist in the late 1960s and knew of the NSA's history of illegal spying, grew suspicious when he heard that the NSA was training a management-level technician for a "special job." Several months later, in January 2003, Klein was taken on a tour of AT&T's downtown hub on Folsom Street. There he saw that there was a secret room being built on the sixth floor, labeled 641A, which was to house special equipment of some kind. During a company downsizing, Klein was transferred to work in the seventh floor Internet room directly above the secret NSA chamber.

Reading like a Len Deighton spy novel, *Wiring Up the Big Brother Machine* details how Klein pieced together one clue after another until he cracked what Big Brother was up to in Room 641A. A light bulb went on after a retiring co-worker gave Klein some technical documents showing that a splitter cabinet in the seventh floor Internet room was connected to panels in the secret room below.

It was obvious to Klein that the splitter—a special glass prism—was being used to split the light beams in the fiber-optic cables into two signals—one signal carrying the message to its normal destination, the other carrying a copy to the NSA computers a floor below. Klein writes: "The important fact is that *each separate signal cantains all the infarmatian*, nothing is lost, so in effect the entire data stream has been copied.... What screams out at you when examining this physical arrangement is that the NSA was vacuuming up *everything* flowing in the Internet stream: e-mail, web browsing, Voice-Over-Internet phone calls, pictures, streaming video, you name it." Klein learned from a co-worker that similar splitter cabinets were being used in other cities, including Seattle, San Jose, Los Angeles and San Diego.

The next big piece in the puzzle came when Klein found out that the NSA's secret room included a piece of equipment called a Narus STA 6400. "I looked it up, and it turned out this was a very sophisticated and specialized product that not only was perfectly suited for sorting through the data stream in real time looking for things, but it was already being marketed specifically to telecommunications and other companies for intelligence and police spying." Klein quickly realized the hair-raising implications of the splitter/Narus setup:

> "The Narus enables them to look at the *content* of every data packet going by, not just the addressing information. It is the dream machine for a police state, one that even George Orwell could not imagine. Not only does it enable the government to see what millions of people are saying and doing every day, but it can build up a database which reveals *the cannections among social graups—who's calling and e-mailing whom*."

Big Brother's Cover-Up Machine

It was a relief for Klein when he got the chance to take a retirement package at the end of 2004. "I realized I was wiring up the Big Brother Machine, and I was not happy about it—I had not signed up to be a spy for the NSA, but to maintain the public telecommunications system. But what could I do? It was apparent that the orders for this came from very high up." Fearful of a government backlash, Klein bided his time after retirement, waiting for "some change in the political winds that would enable me to come forward."

The chance opened up in December 2005 when the *New York Times* broke the story that for three years President George W. Bush had authorized eavesdropping on phone calls and e-mails of "hundreds, perhaps thousands of people inside the United States without warrants." Klein pulled together the information he had on Room 641A, including a summary memo he had written back in 2004,

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Mark Klein

Declan McCullagh

Left: Entrance to secret room 641A in AT&T's central office on Folsom Street in San Francisco (right).

WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 954 | GCU C-701 | 12 March 2010

Reformists Beg Imperialist Warmakers for Peace

Obama's Bloody Afghanistan Offensive

Reuters

AP

Left: U.S., Afghan soldiers during attack on Marja, February 17. Right: Victims of Obama's Afghan offensive in Helmand Province hospital.

U.S. Out of Afghanistan, Iraq! Hands Off Pakistan, Iran!

Having announced late last year that he was ratcheting up the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan to nearly 100,000, President Barack Obama last month launched the largest military operation since the U.S. and NATO forces invaded that country in 2001. On February 13, thousands of troops attacked rural Marja in Taliban-controlled southern Afghanistan. This was the first stage of a wider military offensive aimed at seizing control of Kandahar, the country's second-largest city.

Washington offered cynical promises that the civilian population would be spared during this offensive. But bloody atrocities directed against civilians are inherent in all imperialist occupations because the occupiers view every local resident as a potential insurgent. Indeed, on the second day of the assault in Marja, U.S. troops fired missiles into a family's home, killing 12 people, half of them children. On February 21, in the deadliest single U.S./NATO attack on civilians in six months, three minibuses were blown away in an air strike, killing 27.

Parallel with Obama's surge in Afghanistan, the White House is expanding the CIA's program of using unmanned drone aircraft to launch missile attacks against Taliban fighters in Pakistan, where the government, under U.S. pressure, has launched offensives against Taliban forces in the northwest region bordering Afghanistan. Already, in the first year of Obama's administration, the U.S. carried out more drone strikes in Pakistan than in the previous three years under Bush. More than 700 Pakistanis were killed in these attacks last year alone. Meanwhile, the Pentagon reportedly plans to reinforce the more than 100 U.S. special operations forces currently in Pakistan.

The U.S. military is also stepping up operations in the strategically important Horn of Africa and Gulf of Aden region. Along with escalating drone strikes against suspected Al Qaeda fighters in Yemen, in December Obama approved a series of operations by U.S. commandos together with Yemeni troops that have killed scores of people. In Somalia, the U.S. is reportedly providing training, funds and logistical support for a planned offensive by what passes as the local government, backed up by African Union "peacekeepers," against clan-based Islamic fundamentalist militias that control much of the country.

The Obama administration has also expanded Bush's efforts to force Tehran to rein in its nuclear program. Iran, which claims that it does not aim to develop nuclear weapons, is now subject to a barrage of UN and U.S. sanctions. We oppose these sanctions, which are acts of war. In Saudi Arabia last month, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton lectured Iran's rulers that they "do not have a right" to "pursue nuclear weapons." In fact, given the threats by the U.S. imperialists as well as their Israeli clients, it would be perfectly reasonable for Iran to pursue acquisition of nuclear weapons and adequate delivery systems to deter military attack.

Wars of conquest and occupation are integral to the capitalist-imperialist system, as is demonstrated by the entire history of U.S. imperialism from the Philippines at the dawn of the 20th century to Iraq and Afghanistan today. At home, the capitalist rulers who have looted the economy rake in hundreds of billions in government bailout money while the working class and poor are driven into deeper deprivation, homelessness and misery. The unemployment rate for black workers in Michigan is projected to soon surpass 25 percent—the rate of total unemployment in the depths of the 1930s Great Depression. The only way out of this system predicated on exploitation, racist oppression and war is socialist revolution: the seizure of power by the proletariat and the building of a workers state that will expropriate capitalist property and institute a planned economy based on production for social need.

In the face of the 2001 and 2003 invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, the Spartacist League stood for the military defense of those countries against imperialist attack without giving any political support to the reactionary Taliban cutthroats or the bloody capitalist dictatorship of Saddam Hussein. We raised the call for class struggle at home against the U.S. capitalist rulers. We underlined that every victory for the imperialists in their military adventures encourages more predatory wars while every setback serves to assist the struggles of working people and the oppressed the world over. Today we continue to call for the immediate withdrawal of all imperialist troops and bases from Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia.

In contrast, for years the reformist left built an "antiwar movement" premised on the illusion that the blood-soaked capitalist rulers could be pressured to make peace and serve human needs, exemplified by timeworn demands for money for schools/jobs/health care, not war. As intended, the

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Women's Oppression in Racist Capitalist America

For Free Abortion on Demand!...8

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Afghanistan...

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effect of rallying against "Bush's war" was to promote the electoral fortunes of the Democratic Party—the other party of U.S. imperialism. As the Democrats retook Congress in 2006 and especially as Obama's presidential campaign took off, the protests withered. Upon Obama's election as president, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) held a victory party and Workers World Party (WWP) declared its "joy": Mission accomplished.

Obama's election has, also as intended, given a facelift to U.S. imperialism. But with U.S.-led forces sinking deeper into the Afghan quagmire, Obama's attempt to persuade Washington's NATO allies to commit additional troops is largely falling flat. While Germany agreed to up its troop levels, France balked at the request. And the Dutch coalition government fell when its Labor Party component refused Washington's request to extend that country's military presence in Afghanistan for another year. The *New York Times* (25 February) editorialized: "We fear the Dutch decision could provide cover for wavering politicians elsewhere—Germany, for example, or Canada, which is now scheduled to pull out its troops at the end of 2011."

At home, with most of the population opposing Obama's war in Afghanistan and reeling from the effects of the Great Recession, the liberal-reformist left is beset by dread that Republicans are about to regain control of Congress and, even, the White House two years later. The liberal *Nation* (12 February) spelled it out most clearly: "As for the surge in Afghanistan and the endless war that goes with it, by election time 2010 it's an even bet that it will have further undermined any hopes of a late-inning Democratic Party revival."

The ISO chimes in, more in sorrow than in anger: "Having given the Democrats a huge opportunity to move the country away from the right-wing Republican dominance of the Bush-Cheney years, voters are now not sure they want to return the Democrats to power in the 2010 elections" ("How the Democrats Blew It," *Socialist Worker*, 29 January). For his part, WWP leader Larry Holmes bemoans Obama's "thankless job—and some people consider it a setup—of presiding over this political period" (*Workers World*, 18 February).

The reformists' current task is to re-energize a "movement"—any movement—to put some wind back in the Democrats' sails. Thus the message on offer from the annual March "antiwar" exercise staged by the ANSWER coalition, an outfit founded by WWP and now controlled by the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL): Obama, the Wall Street Democrat, must start listening to his "progressive" supporters, too. After all, according to a 13 December 2009 posting by the PSL on its Web site, Obama is in the middle of a delicate "balancing act between the interests of imperialism, on one hand, and the growing opposition around the world against imperialism on the other."

Baldly expressing the disappointment felt by the President's reformist fan club, the ISO wrote in "The Year of Frustrated Hopes": "Obama had the opportunity to change the direction of U.S. politics and society—and the popularity to accomplish it" (*Socialist Worker*, 29 January). Here is a crystal-clear example of what Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin described in "Marxism and Reformism" (September 1913): "Reformism actually means abandoning Marxism and replacing it by bourgeois 'social policy'." As exemplified by Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal coalition in the 1930s, the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy and reformist left have long sought to influence "bourgeois policy" by means of pressuring the Democratic Party, deceptively offered as the friend of labor, blacks and the poor.

In the midst of the popular euphoria over Obama's inauguration, we reaffirmed the need to fight to break the political chains binding the proletariat and the oppressed to the capitalists. As we wrote in "Barack Obama Takes Helm of Racist U.S. Imperialism" (*WV* No. 929, 30 January 2009):

> "There is no 'common ground' between imperialist president Barack Obama, representative of the capitalist system, which is based on the exploitation of labor, and the working class, including its growing immigrant sector and its strategic black component. Labor desperately needs a fighting leadership to unleash the power of the multiracial working class in struggle for workers' economic interests and for black rights, to organize the unorganized, to demand full citizenship rights for immigrants, and to oppose U.S. imperialism....
>
> "We fight for a workers party with a revolutionary internationalist program aimed at the liberation of the proletariat and all the oppressed. As opposed to the Obama-enthralled reformist opponents, our revolutionary continuity extends from the Bolsheviks of Lenin and Trotsky, who led the 1917 October Revolution. Our watchwords are those of these revolutionary antecedents: for a proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist party to lead the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat and all the oppressed masses. For new October Revolutions!" ■

TROTSKY

LENIN

Socialism and Women's Liberation

In Woman and Socialism, *the first full-length Marxist study of women's oppression, early German Marxist leader August Bebel stressed that the struggle for women's emancipation is strategic to the fight for socialism. Women's oppression is rooted in the institution of the family, a core element of class society that arose with the advent of private property, as Friedrich Engels would further develop in his work* The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State *(1884). As Bebel outlined, complete social equality can be realized only with the abolition of classes in a world socialist society.*

For thousands of years human society has passed thru all phases of development, only to return to its starting point: communistic property and complete liberty and fraternity: but no longer only for the members of the gens, ***but for all human beings***. That is what the great progress consists of. What bourgeois society has striven for in vain, in what it failed and was bound to fail,—to establish liberty, equality and fraternity for all,—will be realized by Socialism. Bourgeois society could merely advance the theory, but here, as in many other things, practice was contrary to the theories. Socialism will unite theory and practice.

But as mankind returns to the starting point of its development, it will do so on an infinitely higher level of civilization. If primitive society had common ownership in the gens and the clan, it was but in a coarse form and an undeveloped stage. The course of development that man has since undergone, has reduced common property to small and insignificant remnants, has shattered the gens and has finally atomized society; but in its various phases it has also greatly heightened the productive forces of society and the extensiveness of its demands; it has transformed the gentes and the tribes into nations, and has thereby again created a condition that is in glaring contradiction to the requirements of society. It is the task of the future to remove this contradiction by re-establishing the common ownership of property and the means of production on the broadest basis.

Society takes back what it has at one time possessed and has itself created, but it enables all to live in accordance with the newly created conditions of life on *the highest level of civilization*. In other words, *it grants to all what under more primitive conditions has been the privilege of single individuals or classes*. Now *woman*, too, is restored to the active position maintained by her in primitive society; only she no longer is mistress, but man's equal....

The complete emancipation of woman, and her establishment of equal rights with man is one of the aims of our cultured development, whose realization no power on earth can prevent. But it can be accomplished only by means of a transformation that will abolish the rule of man over man, including the rule of the capitalist over the laborer. Then only can humanity attain its fullest development. The "golden age" of which men have been dreaming, and for which they have been yearning for thousands of years, will come at last. *Class rule will forever be at an end, and with it the rule of man over woman.*

—August Bebel, *Woman and Socialism* (1879)

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Letter

Feds' Detroit "Terror" Kill

17 February 2010

Dear Workers Vanguard,

The so-called War on Terror took a sinister turn in the Detroit area on October 28, 2009 with the execution style killing of Imam Luqman Ameen Abdullah, leader of the Masjid Al-Haqq mosque, by agents of the FBI.

According to the FBI, a federal complaint was filed identifying Imam Abdullah as "a highly placed leader of a nationwide radical fundamentalist Sunni group". The affidavit continues "Abdullah and his followers have trained regularly in the use of firearms, and continue to train in martial arts and sword fighting". Nowhere in the complaint was the word terrorist, nor did the FBI seek any terrorism charges.

The mosque served the heavily Arab-American community along the Detroit/Dearborn border. Countering the FBI complaint, Dawud Walid, executive director of The Council on American-Islamic Relations-Michigan said: "the congregation he led was poor. He fed very hungry people in the neighborhood who were Christian. He helped and assisted a lot of troubled youth. People would come to him who were hungry and he would let them sleep in the mosque. He would let them in from the elements. They have no linkage to terrorism nationally or internationally. What in the world does Islam have to do with these charges?" (Detroit News, 29 October 2009).

The War on Terror only serves as a pretense for the capitalist rulers to attack and intimidate the "unwanted population at home" and apparently just being of Muslim faith is enough to trigger a murderous assault.

While working in a warehouse and trucking firm the mosque uses for various services and storage, Imam Abdullah and several of his followers were surrounded by FBI agents and local police from the Joint Terrorism Task Force. According to various accounts, the Imam and his followers were ordered out of the warehouse. Four men were allowed to surrender, but the task force unleashed a dog to charge the Imam who shot at it to defend himself. Under the pretext that the Imam shot at the federal agents (the dog was considered the FBI agent) the remaining agents opened fire. The autopsy, which was held up for months because the Dearborn Police feared it would incite the community, showed the Imam was shot 21 times. Even worse, these FBI sharpshooters managed to strike the Imam only

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Defend ILWU Borax Miners!

LOS ANGELES, March 8—On January 31, the Rio Tinto Group mining giant locked out the unionized workforce at the world's second-largest borax mine, located in the Mojave Desert town of Boron, California, after five months of contentious contract negotiations. The nearly 600 miners are organized in Local 30 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU). In the face of outright union-busting by the world's third-largest mining company, the ILWU International has offered up words of solidarity but not the urgent labor action necessary to force Rio Tinto to back down.

With a declining global market share in borax, the company is carrying out a plan worked out months ago to eviscerate the union. Its final contract offer prior to the lockout would abolish the closed shop, allowing Rio Tinto to hire non-union labor; junk seniority rights in promotion, transfer, scheduling and layoffs; and limit the union to four shop stewards who could perform their duties only on their own time. Coupled with a no-strike pledge, the proposal was a calculated provocation that would strip away every reason to have a union while slashing benefits and introducing onerous work rule changes, such as mandatory overtime. When the union membership rejected this offer, the company locked them out and bused in scabs. On March 5, after the ILWU filed charges against the company with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the Rio Tinto bosses withdrew a few of their demands while keeping the ILWUers locked out.

The Rio Tinto Group is a multinational conglomerate that grew out of two companies, one British, the other Australian. Focusing on this fact, the ILWU bureaucracy has pushed national chauvinism, putting out leaflets complaining that a "powerful foreign-owned company" is "attacking American workers" and taking away "cherished Constitutional rights." Whatever their flag, capitalists seek to drive up profit margins by attacking unions everywhere—the ILWU itself was born through bloody battles against the red-white-and-blue shipping and stevedoring companies. And we recall that the ILWU's founder Harry Bridges, venerated by the ILWU tops, was himself born in Australia and was repeatedly threatened with deportation by the U.S. government.

Based on the lie that workers have common interests with their "own" bourgeoisie, the ILWU tops' flag-waving chauvinism poisons the potential for international labor solidarity. Workers from Australia and Canada to Southern Africa have waged their own labor battles against Rio Tinto in recent years, while union miners from Turkey and maritime unionists from Australia have sent delegations to Boron to show their support. Dock workers are strategically placed to stop Rio Tinto's union-busting in its tracks since it is through their hands that borax is shipped around the globe. ILWU locals, rail and other unions in the U.S. and internationally must mobilize to "hot-cargo" (refuse to handle) scab borax! ***Nat America-first chauvinism but internatianal working-class salidarity!***

A generation ago, the bosses pulled out all the stops to break the union in Boron. In a bitter, 132-day strike in 1974, police clashed with striking workers in the streets, and the company set up a makeshift runway to fly in scabs. We wrote at the time in *WV* No. 62 (14 February 1975) that the strike went down to defeat "because ILWU leaders allowed borax to be shipped (some by ILWU longshoremen!) and refused to organize anything but token outside support." Throughout the U.S., union power has been sapped under a leadership that preaches class collaboration and reliance on the capitalist Democratic Party and state agencies like the NLRB. Democratic president Barack Obama has more than proven his merit to Wall Street. Workers need their own party, independent of all the parties of capital, which will fight to expropriate the capitalists by establishing a workers government.

We print below a report from the L.A. Spartacist League on a February 24 rally in Boron for the locked-out workers that was organized by the AFL-CIO.

Getty

Busload of scabs leaving Rio Tinto borax mine, February 2.

WV Photo

Dispatcher

Boron, CA: Labor rally in solidarity with locked-out borax miners, February 24 (above). Delegation of Turkish miners outside union hall in early December.

Reporter's Notebook

Though only about two hours from L.A., when you go to Boron—a company town of 2,000 people—you feel transported back 50 or 100 years in time and dropped in the middle of the movies *Salt of the Earth* or *Harlan County U.S.A.* In fact, the solidarity we witnessed was both inspiring and frustrating. Inspiring in that it showed the potential for multiracial class struggle; frustrating in that the whole event was an exercise in blowing off steam and ***dissipating*** militancy.

Departing from Dodger Stadium in L.A., the cars in the caravan to Boron were festooned with American flags and signs supporting the Borax miners and their families. The ILWU tops' reaction to the lockout has emphasized assisting the workers' families. However, the need of the hour is to mobilize union power in defense of the ILWU and its Local 30 members. As we got within 30 miles of Boron, groups of workers and their families had gathered on many of the freeway overpasses. They were waving American flags and also holding signs. One prominent sign was: "Welcome L.A. Labor."

As the caravan pulled into the union hall, the road was lined with miners and their families welcoming the caravan and thanking everyone for coming. The caravan included four big-rigs full of food from L.A. unions. There also were about 15 or 20 workers from the Bay Area ILWU, including the union drill team. The whole gathering was about 800 to 1,000 people. The spread of unions that were represented was very wide. It included many ILWU members from L.A./Long Beach Local 13 and other locals and over a dozen other unions, from the Teamsters (quite prominent, one of the big-rigs was theirs) to the United Food and Commercial Workers, SEIU service workers and California Nurses Association.

While the borax workers are mostly white, the workers who came up to support them were very integrated. Many of the Local 13 members, as well as other L.A. unionists, were Latino and most of the Bay Area ILWUers were black. There also were a few Asians from various L.A. unions.

To say that borax workers were ecstatic to see all these people is not an overstatement. But all of this energy was not put to any good use. After a brief bathroom break, everyone was urged to get back into their cars and drive around the town and up to the gate of the mine. The caravan was impressive; it had about 225 cars and most cars had several people in them. In the little town of Boron, many people came out to wave at the caravan. The cop presence was very laid-back. The cars went up to the mine gate, which was closed and guarded by a small number of cops and security guards. Clearly they were not expecting any trouble. People just honked their horns, yelled and turned around to go back to the union hall for food, the live band and brief speeches. Everything was very organized, but not to shut down the mine.

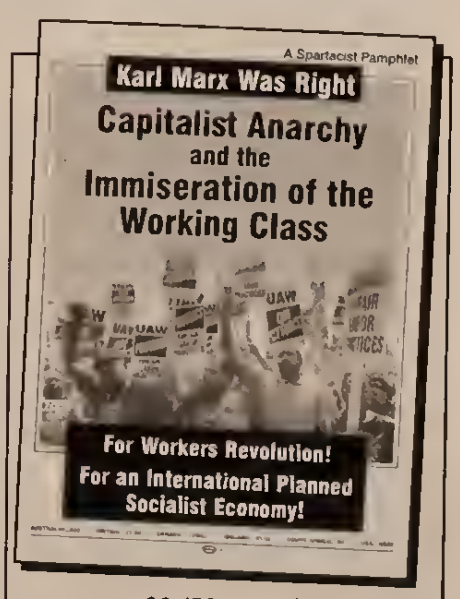
In front of the Local 30 hall was an outdoor rally with a loud sound system, food tables and the bureaucrats. People milled around for over two hours. We distributed *Workers Vanguard* and did not notice any other left presence at all—no salesmen, no one we knew from any left group. Interestingly, we met several women who had worked in the mine. It was physically difficult because the wind was blowing grit into everything.

A number of workers expressed frustration with the fact that they are not stopping the scabs. I was told that about 300 scabs are currently working 12-hour shifts and being housed in nearby motels. There has been picketing at the gate when the scabs go in—some yelling and screaming with no real attempt to stop them. It was clear that I wasn't the only person to whom it had occurred that all these union workers assembled in a tiny company town in the Mojave Desert could really stop the scabs if they wanted to do so. Workers would mention "replacement workers," but as soon as I said "scab," they would, too.

I was also told several times by miners that if they acted too much as though they are on strike, they would lose their unemployment benefits (or rather their hoped-for benefits, as some people said they hadn't gotten them yet). Everyone confirmed that they "aren't eligible" for strike benefits from the ILWU International because they aren't on strike. When I expressed outrage at this, people looked surprised, but they certainly didn't disagree. When I asked if borax was being shipped from the L.A./Long Beach ports, I got different responses. One guy thought it wasn't. Another thought it was and, if so, it showed the sad state of the American labor movement. When I brought up the Democrats, workers expressed both illusions and disappointment in Obama.

Maria Elena Durazo, head of the L.A. County Federation of the AFL-CIO, spoke to the rally on behalf of L.A. labor. She denounced Rio Tinto as a British company and said they couldn't treat American workers this way, the U.S. was not a colony, there had been an American Revolution. She said she was bringing the borax workers American flags that they could wave proudly. It gave you a sense of how much the trade-union bureaucracy was pushing all the flag-waving, chauvinism, etc.—especially outrageous considering how much international support there has been for the Boron miners, from Turkey to Australia. After talking about the children in Boron as her family, she concluded by leading the crowd in chanting "*Sí, se puede*" (Yes, we can), which everyone chanted with enthusiasm.

While the solidarity was impressive, without stopping the flow of borax from Southern California ports and internationally, these workers are in deep trouble. ■



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Young Spartacus

In Defense of Dialectical Materialism

We print below a class given by Spartacist League Central Committee member Don Alexander to the New York Spartacus Youth Club in June 2009. It has been edited for publication.

This class is just to get our feet wet, to begin to absorb the history of Marxism—it wasn't born in a vacuum. The purpose of the class is to uphold dialectical and historical materialism against all forms of subjective idealism.

Now, I'll make some basic assertions, just so we're all on the same page, as they say. Idealism proceeds from the premise that the material world is dependent on the spiritual. It asserts that the spirit, our mind and our ideas can and do exist in separation from matter. The most extreme form of this assertion is subjective idealism. Subjective idealism asserts that matter does not exist at all, but is pure illusion. Idealism asserts that there exists a realm of the mysterious and unknowable that's above or behind what can be ascertained and known by perception, experience and science. Science is thrown out the window.

John Mayall
Karl Marx

W.E. Debenham
Friedrich Engels

***Anti-Dühring* (1877-78), written by Engels in collaboration with Marx, dissected Dühring's idealist philosophical outlook, put forward materialist conception of history.**

Materialism, in direct contradiction, states that the world is, by its very nature, composed of matter, and that everything that exists comes into being on the basis of material causes. Everything arises and develops in accordance with the laws of motion of matter. Materialism teaches that matter is objective reality, existing outside of and independent of ideas, and that, far from the mental existing in separation from the material, ideas, including spiritual ones, are a product of material processes. Materialism also teaches that the world and its laws are knowable and that, while much in the material world might not be known, there is no unknowable sphere that lies outside of the material world.

Our social consciousness reflects and is determined by our social being. I want to start with that because it's not a commonplace, particularly in a period of great religiosity. That's why the quote from the German Marxist Franz Mehring in the current *Workers Vanguard* is so timely [see "Franz Mehring: *On Historical Materialism*," *WV* No. 938, 5 June 2009]. Mehring proceeds from the understanding that material economic conditions are primary in shaping any given society. In his pamphlet *On Historical Materialism* (1893), he also remarks that "the human mind is not the father of the mode of production, but the mode of production is the mother of the human mind." I think this is a really good quote because it says what is.

Our discussions do not take place in a vacuum. Nothing exists in isolation, either in nature or in society. Contradiction, the unity and struggle of mutually opposed forces and tendencies, is inherent within things. Change and movement operate on the basis of contradictions. Contradictions constitute the foundation of movement. In *Anti-Dühring* [*Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science* (1877-78)], Engels succinctly remarked, "*Motion is the mode of existence of matter.* Never anywhere has there been matter without motion, nor can there be." So in other words, comrades, there is no supreme being, there is no god setting in motion the eternal universe. I don't have to tell people here that.

Climbing Out of Obscurantism

The dialectical materialist conception is that all processes of nature and society are in a constant and uninterrupted process of change and development, of eternal becoming. Marx referred to this as "a scandal and abomination to bourgeoisdom and its doctrinaire professors, because it includes in its comprehension and affirmative recognition of the existing state of things, at the same time also, the recognition of the negation of that state, of its inevitable breaking up" ("Afterword to the Second German Edition," *Capital*, Vol. I [1873]). It's not the case that Marx is saying that all previous philosophical inquiries were rubbish. He just makes the point that the materiality of the world is demonstrated by the long and laborious development of the natural sciences.

The ancient materialists anticipated modern materialism, asserting the priority of nature over consciousness and ideas. The mechanical materialists of the 17th and 18th centuries directed their fire against the medieval theologians, and they maintained that material particles in the universe are constantly bombarding each other somewhat at random. They basically viewed human beings as machines. This was materialist, but it was also mechanical. Human consciousness includes one's sensations and ideas as active factors in molding one's environment to procure the means of subsistence. (The actual conditions and methods through which this occurs vary, of course, throughout the course of history.)

You're familiar with René Descartes, the early 17th-century rationalist who believed that there are certain indubitable, self-evident propositions, for instance, the famous one, *cogita ergo sum*—"I think, therefore I am." He figured out that you couldn't doubt your existence if you didn't exist. So, that almost exhausts my Latin.

Another profound statement of subjective idealism was from Bishop George Berkeley, who remarked—it was in the 18th century—*esse* is *percipi*—"to be is to be perceived." So if you didn't see a man slipping on a piece of ice in Central Park during a day in the winter, or if you weren't present when somebody turned off the light to go to sleep, then it didn't happen. Now, I'm going to let Berkeley speak for himself, because unlike most of the professional philosophers defending idealism, he rarely beat around the bush. In his *Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710) he alleged that:

> "All the choir of heaven and the furniture of the earth, in a word all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world, have not any subsistence without a mind... that consequently so long as they are not actually perceived by me, or do not exist in my mind or that of any other created spirit, they must either have no existence at all, or else subsist in the mind of some Eternal Spirit."

As you can see, we have been climbing our way out of obscurantism and idealist flights of fancy for a long time.

The Dialectical Method

The 1939-40 factional struggle within the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) is documented in Trotsky's *In Defense of Marxism*. Trotsky wrote powerfully against the cliquist, anti-Soviet opposition of Max Shachtman, James Burnham and Martin Abern. He characterized them as a petty-bourgeois opposition. They maintained that dialectical materialism didn't have anything to do with working out a concrete political position. I want to read you the opening to "A Petty-Bourgeois Opposition in the Socialist Workers Party":

> "It is necessary to call things by their right names. Now that the positions of both factions in the struggle have become determined with complete clearness, it must be said that the minority of the National Committee is leading a typical petty-bourgeois tendency. Like any petty-bourgeois group inside the socialist movement, the present opposition is characterized by the following features: a disdainful attitude toward theory and an inclination toward eclecticism; disrespect for the tradition of their own organization; anxiety for personal 'independence' at the expense of anxiety for objective truth; nervousness instead of consistency; readiness to jump from one position to another; lack of understanding of revolutionary centralism and hostility toward it; and finally, inclination to substitute clique ties and personal relationships for party discipline. Not all the members of the opposition of course manifest these features with identical strength. Nevertheless, as always in a variegated bloc the tinge is given by those who are most distant from Marxism and proletarian policy. A prolonged and serious struggle is obviously before us."

Following Engels, Trotsky pointed out that, just as Darwin revealed the laws of development of living species of organic matter, so Marx revealed the laws of development of human history. (Darwin was not a conscious dialectician.) The economic forces of production play an indispensable role: they are the ultimate determining factor in social and economic life. The relationships between human beings producing their means of material survival determine the actual relations of production. See—you have to be able to eat and have clothing and shelter, to cooperate in some form or fashion, in order to be able to wrest a living from

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Index Books

Georgi Plekhanov's *The Materialist Conception of History* (1897), Antonio Labriola's *Essays on the Materialistic Conception of History* (1896) and Peter Fryer's "Lenin as Philosopher" (1957) provide further explanation of dialectical materialism.

nature. Upon this rests the entire superstructure of society—the art and the politics and religion and the philosophy and the morality.

This doesn't rule out, of course, the effects of the superstructure upon the economic base. The father of Russian Marxism, Georgi Plekhanov, had the highest praise for Antonio Labriola, the Italian Marxist, a great materialist thinker. But in *The Materialist Conception of History* (1897), Plekhanov pointed out that one of the weaknesses of Lahriola was his tendency to isolate racial factors, explaining the development of human societies in terms of their norms of beauty and their rituals, etc. It's not that these things shouldn't be studied. Plekhanov gives the example of why women among the Ishavs in the Caucasus cut off their braids on the death of a brother, but not on the death of their husbands—what does this mean? Well, this stuff is interesting, but ultimately you have to look at how people procure their means of subsistence. That's what's dominant.

Comrades, the dialectical method is not merely a question of development in the abstract. There's a bourgeois-liberal doctrine of development, of gradualness, that ignores the fact that there are leaps in nature and society, that one form of matter transforms into another through a sudden change. The dialectical method posits that everything in nature and society can only be understood in its fundamental connections with everything else and in its constant movement from simpler forms to higher forms, from quantity into quality.

Trotsky gave many examples about formal logic and its use and its limita-

L.Y Leonidov

Trotsky and Lenin, Moscow, 1920.

tions in this superb book, *In Defense of Marxism*. You know:

> "The Aristotelian logic of the simple syllogism starts from the proposition that 'A' is equal to 'A.' This postulate is accepted as an axiom for a multitude of practical human actions and elementary generalizations. But in reality 'A' is not equal to 'A.' This is easy to prove if we observe these two letters under a lens—they are quite different from each other. But, one can object, the question is not of the size or the form of the letters, since they are only symbols for equal quantities, for instance, a pound of sugar. The objection is beside the point: in reality a pound of sugar is never equal to a pound of sugar—a more delicate scale always discloses a difference. Again one can object: but a pound of sugar is equal to itself. Neither is this true—all bodies change uninterruptedly in size, weight, color, etc....
>
> "Every worker knows that it is impossible to make two completely equal objects. In the elaboration of bearing-brass into cone bearings, a certain deviation is allowed for the cones which should not, however, go beyond certain limits (this is called tolerance). By observing the norms of tolerance, the cones are considered as being equal. ('A' is equal to 'A.') When the tolerance is exceeded the quantity goes over into quality; in other words, the cone bearings become inferior or completely worthless."

Engels on Nature and Dialectics

> Nature is the proof of dialectics, and it must be said for modern science that it has furnished this proof with very rich materials increasing daily, and thus has shown that, in the last resort, nature works dialectically and not metaphysically; that she does not move in the eternal oneness of a perpetually recurring circle, but goes through a real historical evolution. In this connection Darwin must be named before all others. He dealt the metaphysical conception of nature the heaviest blow by his proof that all organic beings, plants, animals and man himself, are the products of a process of evolution going on through millions of years. But the naturalists who have learned to think dialectically are few and far between, and this conflict of the results of discovery with preconceived modes of thinking explains the endless confusion now reigning in theoretical natural science, the despair of teachers as well as learners, of authors and readers alike.
>
> —Friedrich Engels,
> *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* (1880)

Trotsky succinctly describes dialectical thought as the following:

> "Dialectical thinking is related to vulgar thinking in the same way that a motion picture is related to a still photograph. The motion picture does not outlaw the still photograph but combines a series of them according to the laws of motion....
>
> "We call our dialectic, materialist, since its roots are neither in heaven nor in the depths of our 'free will,' but in objective reality, in nature."

Successive Approximations

The German philosopher Georg Hegel was an absolute idealist who was very critically assimilated by Marxists, Lenin especially, and many others. He viewed history as the unfolding of the absolute idea. However, he also recognized that everything that exists changes uninterruptedly; everything comes into being and then passes out of existence. Marx and Engels stood his dialectical idealism, as they said, right side up and extracted its rational kernel from its mystical shell. In the aftermath of the defeat of the 1905 Revolution in Russia, Lenin had to fight for dialectical materialism against those known as the "god seekers" of his party, the Lunacharskys and the Bogdanovs. He forcefully defended the materialist dialectic against its detractors.

The article "Lenin as Philosopher" (*Labour Review*, September-October 1957) by Peter Fryer is just incredibly good, and I'll get back to that. The Healyites, pseudo-Trotskyist political bandits who in 1959 formed the British Socialist Labour League, threw away a very valuable cadre. With characteristic modesty, Fryer wanted to know why we had such praise of him in the issue of *Spartacist* with our article "Healyism Implodes" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 36-37, Winter 1985-86). He didn't think what he wrote was such a big deal, but he was certainly happy about the truthful account we gave of life in the Healyite jungle. That organization abused dialectics very regularly in the service of opportunist politics. As we explained in "Healyism Implodes," they resolved the contradiction between a formally correct program and a corrupt internal "regime":

> "by sharp programmatic departures from Trotskyism: principally, their embrace of the Maoist 'Cultural Revolution,' which was at bottom nothing but an unusually degrading and violent falling out between sections of the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy; and their line on the 1967 Arab-Israeli 'Six Day War' when, in the name of fighting Zionist racism and expansionism, they embraced a totally classless concept of an 'Arab Revolution' consisting of the despotic nationalist regimes which have cravenly colluded with imperialism and Zionism to dismember the Palestinian nation."

Now, in "Lenin as Philosopher," Peter Fryer writes about E.P. Thompson, who was a preeminent British Marxoid historian. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963) is still worth the read—I learned a lot from that. But Thompson claims—and Fryer refutes him—that Marxism is a form of economic reductionism that negates the subjective factor, or what he calls the human agency. In other words, Marxism ignores, allegedly, the role of human consciousness as an active factor. Thompson accuses Lenin of viewing consciousness as nothing but a passive mirror reflection of social reality. That is just exactly the opposite of the truth.

Historia Photo, Bad Sachsa

Georg Hegel

Fryer uses two really wonderful quotes from Lenin—these come from Lenin's *Philosophical Notebooks* (1914)—which sum up dialectical knowledge as "an endless process of the deepening of men's knowledge of things, phenomena, processes, etc., proceeding from appearance to essence and from essence less profound to essence more profound." And, "When human intelligence grapples with a particular thing, draws from it an image (=a concept), that is *not* a simple, direct, dead act, it is not a reflection in a mirror, but a complex, twofold, zigzag act."

Scientific Investigation of History

The International Communist League intervened in the unfolding political revolution in East Germany in 1989-90 based upon a program for proletarian political revolution in the East and socialist revolution in the West [see "For the Communism of Lenin and Trotsky!" *Spartacist* (English-language edition) No. 47-48, Winter 1992-93]. We didn't win, but we fought, and that's key. Afterwards, we had extensive discussion to try to grasp the various aspects of what had happened in that very complex, rapidly developing incipient revolution. Jan Norden, who in 1996 would defect from our organization to co-found the Internationalist Group (IG), belittled and denied the ICL's role as the conscious revolutionary vanguard. He repeatedly claimed, "the key element was missing, revolutionary leadership." The polemical reply, that "we were the revolutionary leadership" in Germany, has a core of truth but is still insufficient. Science proceeds through successive approximations.

What happened was not simply determined by what we did, although what we did was very important. To say otherwise ignores the actual balance of forces and is radically false, both politically and theoretically. While imprisoned under Mussolini, the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci wrote in *The Modern Prince* about the formation of what he called a "collective will," that is, a compact group struggling for power. As Gramsci put it:

> "The active politician is a creator, an awakener, but he neither creates from nothing nor moves in the turbid void of his own desires and dreams. He bases himself on effective reality, but what is this effective reality? Is it something static and immobile or is it not rather a relationship of forces in continuous movement and change of equilibrium? To apply the will to the creation of a new balance of the really existing and operating forces, basing oneself on that particular force which one considers progressive, giving it the means to triumph, is still to move within the sphere of effective reality, but in order to dominate and overcome it (or contribute to this)."

Here's what Fryer says: sometimes there are unforeseen consequences of what one struggles for. He says that:

> "The materialist recognition of the objectivity of being and its laws is, not yet freedom, but the requisite for all real freedom. "It is of course perfectly true that men act with conscious aims and intentions. But no attempt to explain human history in terms of the conscious aims and intentions, wills and desires of men will advance our understanding very far. Man's aims clash, and something happens which no one had intended, desired or foreseen. Therefore any scientific understanding of social development has to start from 'the inner general laws' which ultimately govern both the development of human society and the aims and intentions, ideas and theories, in people's heads."

So men's aims clash. There were also forces that were active in East Germany

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Spartakist photos

German Trotskyist speaker at ICL-initiated rally of 250,000 against fascist desecration of Soviet war memorial in Treptow Park, East Germany, January 1990. ICL banner reads: "Down With NATO! Defend the Soviet Union!"

Dialectical Materialism...

(continued from page 5)

in 1989-90 that tried to stop this process of incipient political revolution cold. One was Gorbachev's Stalinist bureaucracy. After the January 3 demonstration against the fascist desecration of a memorial to Soviet soldiers at East Berlin's Treptow Park, the German imperialists launched a furious anti-communist campaign. Then we saw the Stalinists driving full steam with the anti-Soviet, pro-capitalist West German Social Democratic Party—which we called the Trojan horse of capitalist counterrevolution—for capitalist reunification. [See "'Workers Soviets Must Rule in All Germany!'" *WV* No. 948, 4 December 2009.]

Marxism is a scientific investigation of history that places the acts of individuals in their concrete historical context. So comrade Bert Mason's article in the current *Workers Vanguard* was a fine contribution on the role of Lincoln in the American Civil War ["Honor Abraham Lincoln!" *WV* No. 938, 5 June 2009]. "Lenin as Philosopher" is superb; it's a masterful analysis of dialectical contradictions. I especially appreciated that Fryer put his analysis in the context of World War I, when Lenin was studying Hegel and grappling with the betrayal by the German Social Democrats who had deserted to the side of their own bourgeoisie during the first imperialist world war. How did such a formidable workers party, with vast influence in the German proletariat, come to that state of opportunist degeneration? What was the process of economic and political and social development that led to their social-patriotic capitulation?

Well, that's what Lenin dealt with in his *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916). He examined all the phases of the development of an opportunist layer within the working class. Without this, one couldn't understand how quantity turned into quality. Mutually opposed, contradictory tendencies are inherent in all phenomena of nature and society. Lenin explained how the unity and conflict of oppositions, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in this case, worked themselves out. Lenin assiduously studied Hegel, and we have to, too.

I wrote a short note about an article in *Workers Vanguard* that was uncritical of the American philosopher John Dewey, that quoted Dewey approvingly without criticizing him philosophically ("On John Dewey," *WV* No. 924, 7 November 2008). The same Dewey who had a role in fighting the frame-up of Trotsky by the Stalinist epigones was an opponent of Marxism and of the October Revolution. Dewey was a pragmatist, not any kind of dialectical materialist. Trotsky scathingly denounced pragmatism as a mixture of rationalism and empiricism—empiricism means one's own sense impressions are the ultimate source of knowledge. It doesn't mean that empiricists completely say that there's no independently existing objective world out there. Trotsky denounced pragmatism as the "curse of American thought" and insisted that an unpostponable task of the SWP—this was in 1939-40—was to educate its cadres in the philosophy of dialectical materialism.

Wide World

WV Photo

Cuban militiaman guards oil refinery expropriated from U.S. in 1960. Above: Spartacists at demonstration in defense of Cuba, New York City, September 1994.

Against Philosophical Idealism

This talk wouldn't be complete without a short exposition on the manifestations of the various forms of subjective idealism. Lenin argued that, ultimately, idealism is clericalism. In popular terms, it's sort of like "thinking makes it so." You have probably heard the vulgar version of it: if a tree crashes in the forest and I wasn't present, then it didn't crash. That, ultimately, logically, leads to what is called solipsism—that the only things that are real are one's own subjective impressions and thoughts and sensations.

Many years ago, through a rather laborious process, I studied some of the idealists, who are important to understand. Immanuel Kant, the German idealist, was very interesting, but difficult to read in many ways. His key work, *The Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), sought to reconcile idealism and materialism. Kant didn't deny the existence of "things in themselves," just our ability to know them. He formulated this along the following lines: how are *a priori* synthetic judgments possible? How do we arrive at truth independent of human experience and scientific experimentation? Essentially, what he argues for are the propositions of what is known as common sense, which is really unsystematized and pre-scientific. Kant also studied astronomy, which made him very interesting. But he tried to reconcile materialism and idealism.

In *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy* (1886), Engels had to deal with such thinkers. Of course, he made his way through Ludwig Feuerbach, who rightly criticized Hegel for his absolute idealism. Marx, in his "Theses on Feuerbach" (1845), characterized Feuerbach's materialism as contemplative, noting that for Feuerbach, "things, reality, sensuousness, are conceived only in the form of the ***object, or of contemplation***, but not as ***sensuous human activity, practice***, not subjectively."

In "A Petty-Bourgeois Opposition in the Socialist Workers Party," Trotsky referred to a conversation he had with a certain British political economist who echoed the liberal economist John Maynard Keynes. Keynes was a proponent of "priming the pump," and deficit spending to stimulate demand, and government investment in order to arrest the endemic financial and economic crises of capitalism—some of the stuff that Obama and his administration are tinkering with. On the basis of his discussion with this political economist, with his praise for Keynes and his hatred of Marx, Trotsky concluded that he was an opponent of materialist dialectics in his general outlook. Trotsky says:

> "If it is possible to place a given person's general type of thought on the basis of his relation to concrete practical problems, it is also possible to predict approximately, knowing his general type of thought, how a given individual will approach one or another practical question. That is the incomparable educational value of the dialectical method of thought."

Marxism: A Guide to Action

We have applied this dialectical materialist methodology to many questions. You can look at "Cuba and Marxist Theory" (*Marxist Bulletin* No. 8) where we applied our dialectic, materialist methodology in assessing the formation of a bureaucratically deformed workers state in Cuba. A petty-bourgeois-led, guerrillaist movement led to the destruction of capitalism in Cuba without the leadership of a Trotskyist party. Developing that understanding required the application of a dialectical materialist methodology. It was part of the preservation and extension of our fundamental Marxist program.

This is the same thing as with the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA)—you have to appreciate the role of actual contradictions. The EFCA was a referendum on unionization, with the National Association of Manufacturers and other bosses' organizations waging a major campaign against it while the AFL-CIO and Change to Win union federations campaigned for its passage. While warning the workers against any reliance on any government-prescribed mechanisms of class collaboration, we would support the EFCA in its original form because the card-check provision would make it somewhat easier to organize unions. We drew the class line without hiding our criticism of the role of the defeatist, class-collaborationist union bureaucrats. We examined the concretes of the EFCA with its living contradictions, not on the basis of speculation, but on the basis of scientific investigation of history. Our investigation included what the Socialist Workers Party, the Trotskyists of the time, wrote about the 1935 Wagner Act, which contributed to more comrades doing research on the history of the Marxist movement. [See "Why Marxists Support the EFCA," *WV* No. 929, 30 January 2009.]

Dialectics is not a master key for all questions: you have to make a concrete, scientific analysis. I want to end with a quote from "Lenin as Philosopher," which I think is really apropos of what we're talking about:

> "Men's power to change their world progressively crystallizes out and perfects the scientific element in their concepts; their relative helplessness on the other hand gives rise to the tendency of abstract ideas to fly away from reality and weave themselves into marvelous, internally consistent systems of myth and illusion, from which the real world and real relationships of men to nature and men to men are then deduced."

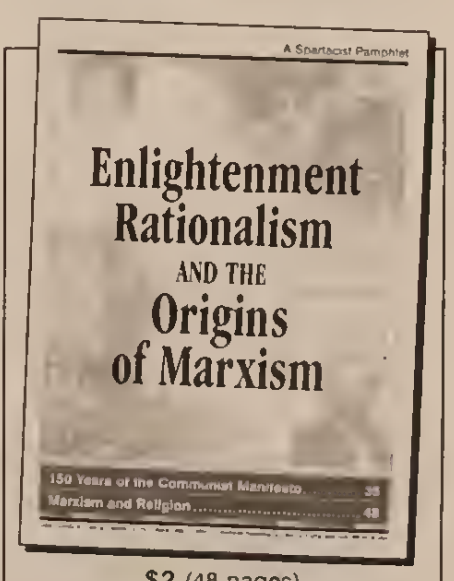
A comrade asked why do we need to read anything by this Gramsci guy? Wasn't Gramsci anti-Trotsky, and so on. Definitely on the Trotsky-Stalin question, Gramsci went not for Trotsky but for Stalin. So that was his contradiction. But he had some very penetrating observations about consciousness, the relationship between the subjective and the objective, and how an objective, concrete analysis of the relationship of forces in the national and international context is critical to deciding how to apply one's program. It's very helpful.

It's a terrible waste to dismiss somebody like that. Just like dismissing Plekhanov, whose renegacy is well known. Following the defeat of the 1905 Revolution, Plekhanov denounced the December Moscow insurrection as an adventure, and in 1917 he opposed the seizure of power by the Bolshevik-led workers. Importantly, however, he never joined hands with those Mensheviks and others who tried to mobilize against the revolution. In the course of the Civil War following the 1917 Revolution, Lenin concluded that there's no way that you could be a genuine communist without understanding Hegel's logic, Plekhanov's philosophical works, and Marx's *Capital*.

That's a challenge to us to rise to a higher theoretical level, because that's the only way to prepare ourselves for the tasks of the struggle for a communist future. It's a laborious, worthwhile, lifelong process.■

Staatsbibliothek, Berlin

Social Democratic president Friedrich Ebert reviewing German troops following WWI.



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Teens, Sexting and Morality Police

Photo Illustration: Ayesha Walker/Youth Radio

Across the U.S., a howl of outraged moralism has arisen against a new, terrifying danger springing from every DSL connection, every Wi-Fi linkup, transmitted by invisible radio waves from GSM tower to GSM tower. This horrifying plague? Young people showing one another their naughty bits.

For "sexting," sending or receiving sexy photos of each other via cell phones and computers, teenagers across the country have been hauled off to jail and charged with creation, possession and distribution of child pornography. According to a 2009 survey by MTV and the Associated Press, three in every ten people between the ages of 14 and 24 have been involved in sexting. But in capitalist America, religious backwardness and "family values" moralism make sexual experiences as scarring and guilt-ridden as possible while draining as much enjoyment from them as can be. We say: Consensual sexual expression is no crime!

It's no surprise that youth want to play digital doctor. Whenever humans have developed a new medium of communication, they have inevitably taken advantage of it to broadcast their physical assets, and doubly so for teenagers with their hormones all atwitter. However, the current uproar over sexting, driven by the bourgeois media, feminists and moral majority think tanks such as the pro-abstinence National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, poses a very real danger—especially, but not only, to the teenagers they say they want to "protect.".

Consider Hope Witsell, a 13-year-old in Florida. She sent a photograph of her breasts to a boy she liked, which was subsequently circulated among other students at her school. For this "crime" she was suspended from school, grounded and banned from the Internet and her cell phone. After another "incident" she was sent to a Christian counselor. For trying to attract a boy, she was virtually branded with a scarlet letter—picked on, mocked and isolated from school, her friends and the outside world. Soon after the next school year started, she committed suicide. Her death can be laid squarely at the feet of the bourgeoisie's anti-sex bigots.

At age 18, Phillip Alpert was arrested in Florida for distributing child pornography because he forwarded a picture of his naked girlfriend to her friends and family, after a fight with her. Stigmatized under the bourgeoisie's vicious anti-sex crusade, he will be forced to register as a sex offender until he is 43 years old. Alpert can't live with his father because his father lives too close to a high school—the same one Alpert attended. Alpert has been kicked out of college and, as a convicted felon, has not been able to find a job. He is afraid to e-mail his lawyer because Alpert's probation officer can send him to jail for e-mail that is not work- or school-related. In an invitation to vigilante terror, Alpert's age, hair color, eye color and home address have been posted on the public sex offender registry on the Internet, and, as he describes, "I've actually had a lot of neighbors come to my door...to check if it was safe for their kids to play around outside, with me here" (*MTV News*, 11 February). ***Hands off Phillip Alpert!***

MSNBC

Hope Witsell

The "family values" hypocrites are intent on stamping out all behavior that threatens the bourgeois conception of marriage as one man on one woman, for life. Fear, guilt and repression are loaded on the very young for even having sexual thoughts. The cops, courts and prisons have been mobilized—the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program classifies "sex offenses" as "Offenses against chastity, common decency, morals, and the like"! This all flows from the capitalist class's dependence on the institution of the family—the main source of the oppression of women and youth. For workers, its purpose is to inculcate social conservatism and to raise the next generation; for the rich, it is the vehicle for passing wealth on to their children.

The sexting witchhunt is an old-fashioned moral panic in the service of social ***reaction***, reminiscent of the early 20th-century hysteria over automobiles leading to "necking" and "heavy petting." Flirting, fighting, arguing, screwing, spreading horrid rumors, making both regrettable and reasonable decisions—these are all part of growing up. What's going on is not a new "hypersexualized" culture, as right-wing and feminist commentators alike have claimed. Nor is it the case that youth today are growing up "too fast," To the contrary, sociologists widely recognize that modern society has forced youth into an artificially prolonged adolescence. Now beset by financial crisis, capitalist society has little to offer those youth who are not scions of bourgeois families—decent education, jobs and an independent future appear further and further out of reach for most, leaving youth more dependent on their families.

Cases like Witsell's and Alpert's have sparked a national debate over what is an "appropriate" penalty for sexting, with the result that over ten states have passed or are considering legislation specifically targeting the practice. But the real criminals here are those forces of capitalist reaction ruining the lives of youth for doing something that youth do naturally. Marxists oppose the prosecution of sexting just as we oppose all laws against "crimes without victims," such as prostitution, drug use or pornography, including "child pornography," which, like all pornography, is simply words and images designed for pleasure. We oppose reactionary "age of consent" laws and all laws that criminalize consensual sexual activity. Our guiding principle in sexual matters is simply that of mutual effective consent—that is, mutual agreement and understanding. We say: *Government out of the bedroom!*

Under capitalism, human relations, including sexuality, will ***always*** be twisted and distorted. The family must be replaced as part of the transition to a classless, communist society. But to even begin to do this, the working class must first smash the capitalist state—whose genuine inhuman perversity was shown in the torture and humiliation of prisoners at Abu Ghraib, Bagram prison and Guantánamo Bay—along with ***all*** of its reactionary laws, and establish a workers state. As we wrote in "Coming of Age in the U.S.A.—Sex, Fear and Religious Reaction" (*WV* No. 877, 29 September 2006):

> "Technology and modern medicine enable humanity to increasingly control the forces of nature and use them to the advantage of human beings. Abortion and birth control give women greater control over their own reproduction, and there are simple measures that greatly reduce the risk of STDs. While these advances allow sex to be a safe and enjoyable act for both men and women, it is only with the destruction of capitalism that humanity will be able to fully avail itself of these advances and be freed from state repression and religious bigotry. And only then will youth be able to do what they please sexually, with whom they please, free of state and parental control."■

Detroit...

(continued from page 2)

3 times in the chest, the majority of bullets entered the upper thighs and groin. The mortally wounded Imam was then handcuffed, while the dog was airlifted to a veterinarian hospital.

Not content with the murderous onslaught and subsequent arrest of numerous mosque members (the majority of whom have since been released on personal bond), the FBI went after Imam Abdullah's son who at last report was fighting extradition from Canada.

The source of the FBI information centered on three undercover informants whom local Muslims said had enticed the Imam and his followers to fence a few stolen items to earn needed cash. "A bunch of petty theives" is how Imam Abdullah El-Amin of the Muslim Center of Detroit described the informants.

I opened this letter saying the War on Terror took a sinister turn here in Detroit and here's why.

Detroit was the venue for the first federal terrorism trial after 911. The accused were Moroccan immigrants, two of whom were acquitted and two were convicted. At the time, United States Attorney General John Ashcroft boasted that a terrorist sleeper cell was broken up. As it turned out, the prosecuting attorney had concealed exculpatory evidence, and all convictions were vacated. The lead prosecutor, who celebrated the frame-up conviction with a big cigar on the front page of the daily paper, is now under federal criminal investigation for his handling of the case.

Similarly, in 2006, the FBI made a big deal of three Palestinian-American kids who bought about 80 cell phones on sale from Walmart with an intent to make a few thousand dollars for themselves reselling them to college students. All terrorist charges were dropped.

The FBI no longer wants to be embarrassed by their inability to frame up innocent civilians based solely on racial profiling. The killing of Imam Abdullah represents an ominous turn away from judicial prosecution to outright lethal force in order to intimidate anyone who doesn't fit the "American Way".

I want to thank Workers Vanguard and the Spartacist League for letting this atrocity be publicized.

With warmest greetings,
Matt P.

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BAY AREA

Thursday, March 18, 6:30 p.m.
The Emancipation of Women Through Socialist Revolution
San Francisco State University
Cesar Chavez Student Center
Rosa Parks D
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
sycbayarea@sbcglobal.net

CHICAGO

Wednesday, March 17, 5:30 p.m.
Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!
University of Illinois at Chicago
Prairie Room, Student Center East
750 S. Halsled Streel
(Exit Halsted Street at UIC-Halsted stop on CTA Blue Line)
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
chicagosyc@sbcglobal.net

LOS ANGELES

Sunday, March 14, 12 noon
The Fight for a Leninist Vanguard Party
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
slsycla@sbcglobal.net

NEW YORK CITY

Wednesday, March 17, 7:30 p.m.
Defend China Against Imperialism, Counterrevolution!
Hunter College
West Building, Room 509C
(No. 6 train to 68th St.-Hunter College)
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
nysl@tiac.net

TORONTO

Wednesday, March 24, 6 p.m.
The Struggle for a Leninist Vanguard Party
University of Toronto
Sidney Smith Hall, Room 1080
100 St. George Street
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
spartcan@on.aibn.com

VANCOUVER

Thursday, March 25, 6:30 p.m.
The Vanguard Party and the Fight for Socialist Revolution
University of British Columbia,
Sludent Union Building, Room 224
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
trotskyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

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Women's Oppression in Racist Capitalist America

For Free Abortion on Demand!

International Women's Day

While bourgeois feminists may celebrate it, March 8—International Women's Day (IWD)—is a *workers'* celebration. It originated in 1908 among female needle trades workers in Manhattan's Lower East Side who marched for the eight-hour day, for an end to child labor and for equal voting rights for women. By far the most important celebration of IWD took place in Petrograd on 8 March 1917 (February 23 in the old Julian calendar), when women textile workers led a strike of more than 90,000 workers. This signaled the end of tsarist rule and the beginning of the Russian Revolution, which culminated in the proletarian seizure of power on November 7 led by the Bolshevik Party.

In recognition of IWD, we print below a presentation, abridged and edited for publication, by Erica Jones in New York City on 10 October 2009. The talk was part of a series of public forums under the title "U.S. Imperialism: Enemy of Women's Rights Internationally—For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!" that were also held in Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles. The forums saluted Dr. George Tiller, the courageous abortion provider who, at age 67, was murdered in his church last May for his services to women at the clinic he headed in Wichita, Kansas. For decades, Dr. Tiller withstood all the threats and provocations spewed out by reactionaries dedicated to forcing women to bear children against their will. He was specially targeted by the anti-abortion terrorists as one of a very small number of doctors performing late-term abortions.

Dr. Tiller's murderer, Scott Roeder, obscenely sought to turn his crime into an endorsement of assassinating doctors in the name of saving "babies" during his trial in January. But on January 29, the jury took only 37 minutes to find Roeder guilty of murder. His sentencing is scheduled to take place on April 1.

Dr. Tiller's surviving family decided to close the clinic, so at least in this way the killer achieved his aim of denying more women the still formally legal right to abortion. But in the wake of Tiller's murder, his longtime colleague Dr. Leroy Carhart began performing late-term abortions at his clinic in suburban Omaha, Nebraska. Fully aware that this places him in the crosshairs of such anti-woman reactionaries as Operation Rescue founder Randall Terry, who denounced Roeder's trial as a "scam," Dr. Carhart hired two of Tiller's former staff members and began training his own clinic staff in the practice of late-term abortions because "there is a need, and I feel deeply about it." We have the deepest admiration for Drs. Tiller and Carhart and their staff, who put their lives on the line to defend women's rights.

* * *

We are here today to honor the memory of Dr. George Tiller. On May 31, Dr. Tiller, one of only three doctors still providing late-term abortions in the United States, was shot and killed at the church he attended. A right-wing anti-abortion bigot has been arrested. Tiller had been a main target of the "pro-life" god squad for decades. In 1991, tens of thousands of Operation Rescue fanatics blockaded his clinic for six weeks. They campaigned —successfully—to have him prosecuted; boycotted his suppliers; tailed him with hidden cameras; branded him "Tiller the baby killer"; hit him with lawsuits, legislation and regulatory complaints; and protested relentlessly. Some sent death threats. One bombed his clinic. Another tried to kill him in 1993, firing five shots and wounding him in both arms.

Between 1993 and 1998, anti-abortion terrorists murdered *seven people* for providing abortions: three doctors, two clinic workers, an escort and a clinic security guard. Doctors trained in and practicing abortion are becoming extinct. There is justifiable fear that they and their families, friends, co-workers will be subjected to harassment, violence and death.

VAAP

IWD in Petrograd, 1917: Demonstration led by women textile workers touched off February Revolution.

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Before I joined the Spartacist League, I attended a forum on the woman question a few months after the murder of abortion doctor Barnett Slepian in Buffalo in 1998. Our comrade Carla, who gave the presentation, quoted the French utopian socialist Charles Fourier, who said that you could gauge what level a society had attained by the position and status of women within that society. She then asked the audience, "So, looking around, where do women stand in 1999?"

Well, it's ten years later and women still stand in the same place in this miserable capitalist society. Doctors can still get prosecuted and even murdered for providing women with abortions. One in five American children lives in poverty, the highest rate in the industrialized West, and nearly eleven million have no health insurance. Hundreds of thousands are in foster care, and even before the financial crisis hit, 1.5 million were homeless. The infant mortality rate in the inner cities of Washington, D.C., New Haven, East St. Louis and Chicago rivals that of Malaysia. This deplorable fact is largely attributable to the lack of health care available to poor women. It is also partly due to the great difficulty of getting an abortion in the U.S., even compared with other industrialized countries.

"Democratic" Imperialists: Enemies of Women's Rights

In the epoch of imperialist decay, the period we live in, where the capitalist economic system has long outgrown its progressive character and acts as an obstacle to humanity's future, millions of women in many sections of the world lead short, brutalized lives of pain and toil. Female children's genital organs are mutilated; women are bought and sold like cattle in the form of the bride price and dowries; women are killed with impunity in the name of "honor." Approximately 25 percent of the world population lives in countries with highly restrictive abortion laws, mostly in Latin America, Africa and Asia. In some countries, such as Chile, women still go to prison for having illegal abortions.

In countries like Afghanistan, women are prohibited access to simple contraception, like condoms, let alone abortion. This is a country where girls are assaulted for going to school and female politicians are shot or threatened with beheading for daring to work outside the home. In Iraq, the U.S. imperialist occupation has meant the *resurgence* of religious reaction in a country that was formerly known in the Near East for its secularism.

No matter how much they hypocritically yell about "freedom," the U.S. ruling class is the bloodiest ruling class in history and is the main enemy of the workers, women and the oppressed in the U.S. and worldwide, insofar as it is still the strongest capitalist power in the world today. Our starting point is proletarian class opposition to the U.S. capitalist rulers and to the imperialist system as a whole. We call for all U.S. troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan now! Hands off Pakistan! Hands off Iran!

The closest women ever came to the possibility of social liberation in Afghanistan was the situation that opened 30 years ago with the Soviet military intervention. The age-old enslavement of women had begun to break down starting in 1978 under the regime of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, backed by the then-Soviet Union. Women were becoming doctors and lawyers, casting off the stifling head-to-toe *burqa* and walking the streets of Kabul, unaccompanied, in modern dress. But in one of the biggest covert CIA operations in history, the U.S., in a proxy war against the Soviet Union, backed an Islamic insurgency that violently opposed the regime's attempt to reduce the traditional bride price and introduce education for girls and adult women.

This was probably the first shooting war in modern history that was specifically ignited by the question of women's liberation. We hailed the Soviet Army's intervention in Afghanistan in 1979 against the Islamic reactionaries, and we centered our propaganda on what the defeat would mean for the masses of the Afghan peoples, particularly women. And we highlighted the threat posed to the Soviet Union, the degenerated workers state which we unconditionally militarily defended.

The Soviet intervention was unambiguously progressive, underlining our Trotskyist understanding that despite its degeneration under a Stalinist bureaucratic caste, the Soviet Union had remained a

WV Photo

Washington, D.C., January 1992: SL joined 2,000 others in defending abortion clinics against Operation Rescue bigots.

workers state embodying historic gains of the October Revolution of 1917, centrally collectivized property and the planned economy. A Red Army victory in Afghanistan would have posed the extension of the social gains of the October Revolution through a prolonged presence leading to Afghanistan's integration into the Soviet system, which would have brought tremendous gains to the hideously oppressed Afghan peoples. The Soviet intervention also offered the prospect of reanimating the program of revolutionary internationalism in the Soviet Union, spurring the struggle for political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy. The Soviets' withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1988-89, a futile attempt to conciliate imperialism, was a betrayal of Afghan women that also paved the way for the restoration of capitalism in the USSR itself.

The reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO), in an article titled "Should the Left Call for Taliban Victory?" [SocialistWorker.org, 18 August 2009] says: "We should condemn unreservedly the oppression of women and the general social conservatism of the pre-2001 Taliban regime, as well, of course, as their efforts to cut deals with regional and global superpowers against the interests of the vast majority of Afghans." These fake socialists express concern over the state of women in Afghanistan now. Too bad that wasn't the case 30 years ago when it really mattered. The coming to power of anti-woman fundamentalist reactionaries in Afghanistan was actually cheered on by a number of left groups, like the ISO. In the current period, they helped build the "movement" to elect Obama, who ran on a promise to beef up the military occupation there. After his election and the ISO's victory party to celebrate it, Obama, true to his promise, has committed to sending more troops to Afghanistan than Bush to carry out the bloody occupation.

The Family: Key Institution of Women's Oppression

The question of women's oppression is one of the oldest social issues. In his 1884 book, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, Friedrich Engels lays out the historical roots of women's oppression by means of the family in the rise and consolidation of private property and the state. He writes that "the overthrow of mother-right was the world historical defeat of the female sex. The man took command in the home also; the woman was degraded and reduced to servitude, she became the slave of his lust and a mere instrument for the production of children."

The development of productive techniques—especially the development of agriculture—led for the first time to the existence of a social surplus that made possible a leisured ruling class. The division of society into antagonistic classes brought also the need for a state to protect the ruling class. The class division of society led to the monogamous family and patrilineal descent. The biological fact of childbearing and child rearing became tied to the social oppression of women. As a means of consolidating wealth in the hands of a tiny minority, the patriarchal family decreed monogamy for women as a way to ensure that inheritance of property went to the proper descendants.

The institution of the family reinforces, as Engels put it, "the supremacy of the man over the woman, and the individual family as the economic unit of society." The family is a key institution for the oppression of women and youth. For the proletariat, which has no property to leave to the next generation, the family serves to produce future generations of workers for capitalist exploitation and to provide for the care of the young and the old and other social services the capitalists don't want to pay for. The family also indoctrinates young people in the ideologies pushed by the bourgeoisie, instilling social conservatism.

Women's liberation requires a socialist revolution to end capitalist rule and lay the material basis for the replacement of the family, opening the door not only to legal equality but to social equality. The family in its economic and social functions can't simply be done away with. It must be replaced by the socialization of housework and other tasks that now fall upon it. To do so means a comprehensive network of free, well-equipped, 24-hour childcare centers; free, top-quality medical care including abortion, no matter what term in pregnancy; socialization of such services as laundry and the preparation of meals; free access to all educational institutions. But achieving this, placing society's resources truly in the service of working people, requires the overthrow of the capitalist private property system and the creation of a socialized economy under a revolutionary workers government, the dictatorship of the proletariat, which replaces the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Oppression of women affects all classes, but the fight for women's liberation is inseparably linked to the struggles of the working class and the freeing of all working people from capitalist exploitation. The oppression of women is a question of *special oppression* internationally because you cannot fight for socialist revolution anywhere on this earth without championing the emancipation of women.

Korotzer/NLN

AP

WIVB-TV

Above: June 2009 NYC vigil for Dr. George Tiller (top right). Bottom right: Dr. Barnett Slepian, murdered by anti-abortion terrorist in 1998.

The Bolsheviks and Women's Emancipation

It is our task to build an internationalist, vanguard working-class party that will lead the working class to seize the means of production—a party like the Bolshevik Party that led the 1917 Russian Revolution. The revolution was sparked by mass demonstrations in February 1917 by what Trotsky called the most oppressed and downtrodden part of the proletariat, largely women textile workers, demanding bread. In October, Lenin's and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party led the *socialist* revolution. The proletarian regime removed from the books all legal references to "illegitimate" children, made marriage and divorce simple civil acts and got rid of all laws against consensual sex, including homosexuality. In its insistence on individual rights and gender equality, the Bolsheviks' Family Code constituted nothing less than the most progressive family legislation the world had ever seen.

In 1920, women were provided the right to free abortion on demand. The clearing out of reactionary laws was coupled with attempts to afford mothers all the material resources possible. To the extent they could, the Bolsheviks set up communal kitchens and laundries and childcare centers. And they did this under conditions of immense poverty and devastation resulting from World War I and also from the Civil War, in which domestic counterrevolutionaries were aided by numerous capitalist countries that invaded the workers state. But the Bolsheviks recognized that without qualitative economic development, the liberation of women was a utopian fantasy. Leon Trotsky explained that from the beginning, the Bolsheviks recognized that the actual liberation of women was unrealizable on a basis of "generalized want."

Lenin's Bolsheviks broke the capitalist system at its weakest link, and they understood that unless the proletarian revolution was extended to the major capitalist powers, most immediately Germany, an isolated dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia could not long survive. They initiated the Third (Communist) International to extend the revolution. But the pressure of imperialist encirclement, the devastation of the Russian working class in the Civil War and the isolation of the workers state, particularly after the defeat of a revolutionary opportunity in Germany in 1923, enabled a bureaucratic layer headed by Stalin to usurp power in a political counterrevolution in 1923-24.

While resting on and deriving its privileges from the socialized property forms of the workers state, the Stalinist bureaucracy was not irrevocably committed to their defense. Stalin's "theory" of "socialism in one country," expressing the nationally limited interests of the Kremlin bureaucracy, increasingly turned the Communist International from an instrument of the world revolution into a new obstacle to revolution. The overall impact on women of the bureaucracy's usurpation of political power from the proletariat was decidedly negative. In June 1936, the Soviet Central Executive Committee issued a decree outlawing abortion. The new law offered incentives to childbearing by providing stipends for new mothers, large bonuses for women with many children and longer maternity leaves. It made divorce harder to get and stiffened the penalties for not paying alimony or child support. The bureaucracy declared the oppressive institution of the family a "socialist" unit.

The Stalinist bureaucracy opposed the fight for international revolution and so degraded the great ideals of communism with bureaucratic distortions and lies that, in the end in 1991-92, the working class did not fight against the revolution's final undoing and the restoration of capitalist rule under Boris Yeltsin. We defended the Soviet degenerated workers state, the DDR (East Germany) and the East European deformed workers states unconditionally against military attacks by imperialism and against internal counterrevolution while at the same time fighting for proletarian political revolution. Today we defend the remaining deformed workers states: China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam.

The restoration of capitalism in East Europe and the Soviet Union was a direct blow to women, in every country. I came across an article on the Huffington Post Web site that told a story about a woman who was seeking an abortion in Poland, where it is now severely restricted. She had a condition in which pregnancy would likely cause blindness; as a result of being denied the abortion, she nearly went blind. The author, Vanessa Gera, writes: "Abortions were easily available under communism but with the transformation to democracy the once-marginalized Catholic church regained significant influence. Today Poland allows the termination of a pregnancy until the 12th week but only if the mother's life is in danger, the fetus is irreparably damaged or the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest." This is a good example of what capitalist counterrevolution has meant in the former Eastern bloc and what "democracy" under capitalism means.

Democrats Attack Abortion Rights

Abortion is a politically explosive issue everywhere because it raises the spectre of women's equality. This simple and safe medical procedure provides women with some control over reproduction. For this reason it is viewed as a threat to the institution of the family. For a good part of the last 40 years, the anti-abortion crusade has been on the cutting edge of all-sided social reaction, wielded by institutionalized religion backed by the repressive power of the state under both the Democratic and Republican parties.

The emergence of the religious right in the late 1970s as an increasingly powerful and accepted force shaping social policy reflected the overall political and economic interests of U.S. imperialism at the time. Coming to office in 1977, the Democratic Carter administration kicked off an onslaught of domestic social reaction coupled with the renewal of U.S.

continued on page 10

Der Spiegel

Tass

Soviet tanks in Afghanistan, Afghan women in 1980. Red Army intervention opened prospect of social emancipation for women.

Abortion...

(continued from page 9)

imperialism's Cold War drive aimed at the destruction of the Soviet Union. The American ruling class needed to overcome widespread fear and loathing of the government following the explosive years of the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War, the rise of the New Left and finally the Watergate break-in that forced the resignation of Republican president Richard ("I am not a crook") Nixon in 1974.

For the bourgeoisie, the social turmoil and defiance of authority were deeply disturbing, and the potential for an alliance of black militants and radicalized students with an increasingly restive labor movement was dangerous. Thus once the ruling class had cut its losses in Vietnam, where U.S. imperialism was defeated by the heroic workers and peasants, and sealed up that source of social instability, a major bourgeois ideological assault was launched to overcome the "Vietnam syndrome" and to instill an unquestioning acceptance of capitalism, God and family, including once again the desirability of dying for one's country.

Abortion rights were among the gains made when the rulers felt they had to grant some concessions to the restless population. But like all such gains under capitalism, they were eminently reversible. The Hyde Amendment, enacted into law under Jimmy Carter, eliminated federal funding of abortion coverage under Medicaid, essentially depriving poor women of access to abortion. During Bill Clinton's eight years in office, safe access to abortion was effectively gutted across much of the country. The number of abortion providers plummeted 14 percent between 1992 and 1996, and a huge number of laws were passed chipping away at abortion rights, including parental consent regulations targeting teenagers.

"Crisis pregnancy centers"—fake clinics set up to subject pregnant women to anti-abortion propaganda and otherwise pressure them to carry the fetus to term—now outnumber actual abortion clinics. There are as many as *4,000* of these anti-abortion centers, which have received $60 million in federal abstinence and marriage-promotion funds. Meanwhile, 87 percent of U.S. counties have *no* abortion clinic.

As for Obama, while he claimed he was outraged by Dr. Tiller's murder, as the Commander-in-Chief of U.S. imperialism he is the class enemy of working and oppressed women around the world. He explicitly disavowed defending the rights of women as well as immigrants in his health care proposal, proclaiming that "the reforms I'm proposing would not apply to those who are here illegally" and that "under our plan, no federal dollars will be used to fund abortion, and federal conscience laws will remain in place." Earlier, Obama had pledged to uphold "the tradition in this town, historically, of not financing abortions as part of government-funded health care." The "tradition" Obama is referring to is the Hyde Amendment.

Formal legality alone will not help poor, minority and working-class women get abortions if there's no doctors around to perform them and no clinics left to perform them in, and if they don't have the money to pay for them. We have always fought for free abortion on demand as a necessary component of free, quality health care for all.

Today, millions of poor women are denied access to abortion under Medicaid programs. Only four states—New York, Hawaii, Maryland, Washington—provide state funding to allow Medicaid insurance to pay for abortions. Thirteen other states, including California and Illinois, make Medicaid recipients seeking abortions get a court order—they have to plead before the bourgeois justices to be allowed to not have a child. In 32 other states, funding for abortion is restricted to a woman whose life is in danger, is a victim of rape or is carrying a child of incest. Women living in these states are either forced to bear a child, forced to have an illegal abortion or forced to do whatever it takes to try to come up with the cash to travel across the state line to pay for an abortion, if it's not too late in the term.

Ryan/NY Times

EPA

Above: Evicted renter with her belongings on Milwaukee street. Right: Demonstrators carry banner outside White House on World AIDS Day, December 2009. Blacks account for majority of new HIV infections among women.

For all their lip service about "the right to choose," the Democrats have repeatedly slashed access to abortion for working women and the poor. Obama calls for a "dialogue" with the anti-woman bigots; Hillary Clinton wants abortions to be "rare." The Democrats pose as friends of labor and the oppressed, while the Republicans openly flaunt their anti-union, racist, anti-gay, anti-woman, anti-immigrant program. Both parties carry out fundamentally the same policies, while the Democrats lie about it more.

Black Women and Abortion Rights

In his 2006 book, *The Audacity of Hope*, Obama talked about "the collapse of the two-parent black household" and lectured that to reduce poverty we have to "encourage teenage girls to finish high school and avoid having children out of wedlock." This program for "change" is nothing more than labeling women who have children out of wedlock as deviants who breach the rule that women should remain monogamous, abstinent until marriage. The ruling class does not care about children or teenagers—look at the urban schools, where children are trained to walk through metal detectors, subjected to security guards, in sick preparation for populating the U.S. prisons.

The bourgeoisie has all kinds of mouthpieces. In 2006, Democrats Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton kicked off a three-day event in Dallas to mobilize the black vote. They said abortion has been used too much to block discussion of issues like voting rights and affirmative action, i.e., electing the next black Democrat. When the Hyde Amendment was passed, Jackson wrote an open letter congratulating Congress.

After years of having no position, in early 2004 the NAACP officially declared it was in favor of abortion rights, a stance it quietly rescinded months later after significant backlash, which included loss of conservative donors. Now the NAACP won't officially take a stand one way or the other, despite efforts spearheaded by Alveda King, Martin Luther King Jr.'s niece, to get them to adopt an anti-abortion resolution. Alveda King outrageously argues that abortion is tantamount to genocide of the black race. Her blog has a link to a Web site, blackgenocide.org, dedicated to throwing black women back to a time prior to the legalization of abortion, when unwed women were subjected to all kinds of hell for getting pregnant.

Wake Up Little Susie, a book by Rickie Solinger, gives you a picture of what life was like for single pregnant black and white women prior to *Roe v. Wade*. She notes that in the late 1950s and early '60s, "in every section of the country, state legislators either passed or tried to pass laws mandating substantial fines and prosecution, incarceration, and sterilization of women who 'persisted' in having children without being married." She noted that some of those victimized were women who had gotten abortions. From 1945 to 1973 at least 1.5 million unwed mothers in the U.S. carried their fetus to term and gave the baby up for adoption, many finishing pregnancies secretly in maternity homes.

An unmarried black pregnant woman looking for help prior to *Roe* had even less options. In the 1950s, most maternity homes excluded blacks; state laws sought to exclude unmarried mothers from government assistance. Adoption, an option widely accessible to white mothers, was virtually unheard of for black unwed mothers: no one wanted to adopt a black baby. Solinger discussed the case of one black woman in Illinois who was arrested and charged with desertion when she tried to give her child up.

Black Women and the American Nightmare

It wasn't until the 1940s that public money became available to unwed mothers and their children through the Aid to Dependent Children program. As many potential recipients were black, a campaign was launched against the black unmarried mother. White racist policy makers pointed to high rates of black "illegitimate" pregnancy, harked back to slavery's racist myths about blacks' uncontrollable sexuality and promiscuous childbearing and located the source of these alleged behaviors in biologically determined inferiority. This was later supported by the racist book *The Bell Curve* by Charles Murray and Richard Herrnstein, which claims that social disparities stem from the higher fertility rates of genetically less intelligent groups, including black people. Such views reflect the origins of American capitalism, built on the backs of black chattel slaves.

The Clinton administration carried out a relentless campaign against poor and black women that went virtually unopposed by feminists and union "leaders." In 1996, as part of his campaign to "end welfare as we know it," Clinton signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, which slashed benefits to the poorest people. The rulers play the race card to better "divide and rule." Our perspective is to fight against the threat posed by slave-labor "workfare" by calling for jobs for all at union wages. We fight for the unions to organize the unorganized. This is the program to cut across the divisions between employed and unemployed, skilled and unskilled, and unionized and unorganized workers.

Today the fastest growing concentration of black women occurs not in the workforce but in the prisons. Much of this rise can no doubt be attributed to the "war on drugs." Recently I read an interesting book on black women and contraception called *Killing the Black Body*, by Dorothy Roberts. In it she points out:

> "Many Americans believe not only that Black mothers are likely to corrupt their children, but that Black children are predisposed to corruption. This trend is epitomized by the panic over 'crack babies.' Black infants irreparably damaged by the mothers' use of crack during pregnancy.... Newspaper stories warned of a horde of Black children about to descend on inner-city kindergartens in need of high-cost special services. But the brain damage crack babies sustained was supposed to cut even deeper: lacking an innate social conscience, crack babies were destined to grow up to be criminals."

Similarly, the Spartacist League argued 20 years ago that the "crack baby" hype was a bogus, racist campaign. Now even the *New York Times* admits as much.

In 1989, officials in Charleston, S.C., initiated a policy of arresting pregnant women whose prenatal tests revealed they were smoking crack. A team of police officers tracked down expectant mothers and raided maternity wards to haul away patients in handcuffs and leg irons hours after giving birth. Women remained shackled to their beds during the entire delivery. Shackling incarcerated women to their beds while in labor is still a practice in many states. Once the baby is born, the woman is allowed to bond in shackles.

We consider drug use, prostitution and gambling as "crimes without victims" and call for their decriminalization. The capitalist state's criminalization of these activities has nothing to do with the welfare of society and everything to do with repressing the population. Drug use or addiction, depending on the circumstances, may be a health concern, but it should not be a crime.

Being black, poor and with little or no access to quality health care and contraception is a deadly combination for many.

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Black women represent 66 percent of new AIDS cases among women in the U.S. HIV infection is the leading cause of death among black women aged 25 to 34. In NYC there is a government program called HASA (the HIV/AIDS Services Administration), which helps provide housing for poor people living with AIDS. However, in order to qualify they must have AIDS—that is, their T-cell count has to have dropped below 200. So, in order to qualify, poor people living with HIV have been known to stop taking their antiretroviral medications, allowing their T-cells to drop just to get a roof over their head.

The fight against sexual, racial and all oppression is part of our fight for world socialist revolution. In the U.S., the call for black liberation through socialist revolution encapsulates our fight for a third American revolution, a workers revolution. The realization of the age-long dream of black freedom—that is, the complete smashing of the color bar—can occur only through the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. In America, black working women suffer triple oppression: as women, as members of a race-color caste and as workers. The program for the emancipation of the black working woman is that program which enables the working class to forge a revolutionary internationalist party to lead the struggle to smash capitalist-imperialist rule.

Free, Quality Health Care for All!

In racist America, where jobs are getting harder and harder to come by, the forcible segregation of the black population at the bottom of society is wielded by the capitalist rulers as an effective club in holding back working-class struggle. Once serving as what Karl Marx called a reserve army of labor to be brought in during economic booms, under decaying capitalism blacks in the ghettos are now deemed to be a surplus population, an unprofitable mass not worth maintaining even at the most meager subsistence level. We fight for jobs for all, for a shorter workweek with no loss in pay, for national public work programs at union wages and unlimited unemployment benefits. We fight against all discrimination against minorities, women and gays and call for full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

The racist American rulers arrogantly presume that they can get away with starving the poor, killing the sick and aged and further impoverishing all of labor without provoking any social protest. But they cannot eliminate the class struggle, born of the irreconcilable conflict of interest between labor and capital. Scenes of gutted dwellings, devastated communities and ruined families are being multiplied across the country at a rate not seen since the Great Depression of the 1930s. People cannot stand having no future for themselves or their kids, or feeling oppressed like slaves, with poverty, disease, no retirement benefits, no health care.

The strategy of the trade-union bureaucracy is to build an "alliance" with business, for example, over the question of health care reforms. The *New York Times* had an article about Dennis Rivera, an SEIU bureaucrat heading up their health care campaign. He is in alliance with Wal-Mart management and hospital administrators—the same ones who particularly here in New York cut the pay and pensions of the members of his own hospital union. Organizing Wal-Mart workers would do a lot for the *entire* working class; crawls for the Democrats in D.C. will do nothing. The labor movement has been deceived and betrayed by the labor traitors, who sacrifice workers on the altar of the capitalist private property system.

The Democrats' posture as "friends" of working people makes them effective political representatives for enforcing the rule of a system based on exploitation and oppression. Restoring the profitability and competitive edge of U.S. imperialism, where health care costs are the highest and the health of the majority of the population the worst in the advanced industrialized countries, is the real name of Obama's "health care reform" game. We fight for free, quality health care for all!

As Marx and Engels wrote in the *Communist Manifesto*, "Not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons—the modern working class—the proletarians." The current situation cries out for a revival of labor struggle to stop the attacks on health and pension benefits. Virtually every strike in the past two decades has been over defense of such benefits. The labor movement would find many allies if it were to take up the fight for socialized medicine—the expropriation of the parasitic health care and drug companies, which are an immediate threat to the well-being of almost everyone in this country. But the fight for such demands directly poses the need for a political fight to oust the present sellout union tops and replace them with a class-struggle leadership.

Women and Revolution

August 1970: Spartacist contingent at first major "women's liberation movement" march, New York City.

Reformists Tail Capitalist Politicians

In NYC, when the news first broke of Dr. Tiller's murder we looked for protests to participate in. But what pose as pro-abortion groups basically did nothing in response to his murder, mainly candlelight vigils. A doctor who performed third-trimester abortions was not a very popular cause among the pro-Democratic Party "pro-choice" organizations. Groups like N.O.W. and NARAL looked to the election of Obama as the key to defeating the anti-abortion bigots. You can barely get these groups to say "abortion" anymore, and forget about free abortion on demand.

As for the reformists, the Workers World Party (WWP) bemoans "the FBI's lackadaisical approach to the arrest of anti-abortion terrorists" and writes, "Why haven't there been serious, probing undercover investigations that could actually prevent these terrorist acts before they happen?" (workers.org, 11 June 2009). Perhaps it has something to do with the fact that the capitalist state is a weapon of class oppression, whose purpose is to suppress the working class when it tries to defend itself. By pushing illusions in the neutrality of the capitalist state, WWP participates in all known ways in politically disarming the fight for women's liberation and the liberation of all the oppressed.

The International Socialist Organization's answer to everything is to build "the movement," that is, cross-class coalitions. They complain: Bush got elected for a second term because the movement wasn't strong enough, the war on Iraq continues because the movement did not come together, clinics and abortion doctors are defenseless against right-wing attack because the pro-choice movement has retreated. Well, the real purpose of the ISO's "movement" was to get Obama elected, making it a movement that guarantees that nothing really changes. An article called "Defending Abortion Rights" by Sharon Smith in the ISO's *International Socialist Review* (July-August 2009) notes that "entrusting politicians to defend legal abortion has proven a disaster for the pro-choice movement." This is pretty rich coming from the ISO, which consistently runs campaigns to pressure and build platforms for capitalist politicians.

I was in Buffalo in the late 1990s when Dr. Slepian was killed and thousands turned out in protest. A sniper shot him through his kitchen window. WWP built a coalition to organize a protest of the murder. Their model of "stopping anti-woman and racist violence together" is building platforms for capitalist politicians such as Democrats and Greens. This particular coalition included local N.O.W. chapters campaigning for Chuck Schumer for Senator and for other Democrats.

At one point, one of the WWP organizers told me they were having difficulty appealing to the black community. I pointed out that for one thing, there was nothing addressing black people in their call or leaflet for the protest. She explained how the coalition was not in favor of "singling out racism" around this issue. But the killing of Dr. Slepian was a particular blow to the thousands of black and poor women with Medicaid seeking abortions in Buffalo, as he was the only abortion provider who accepted it. His clinic, situated in a predominantly poor black neighborhood, was frequented by white right-wing bigots with video cameras to intimidate the women and staff going in.

Not Feminism but Socialist Revolution Will Liberate Women

Despite the triple oppression that black women face in racist, sexist capitalist America, they have never been attracted in significant numbers to the "women's liberation movement." This in itself is not surprising: the petty-bourgeois feminism that dominates the "movement" has very little to offer working women—black or white—and has had as little success in recruiting poor white women as poor black ones. Communists vigorously fight for equal rights for women even under capitalism. But the promise of equal rights under capitalism means no more for working women than the "right" to be equally exploited instead of superexploited, to be merely a wage slave instead of "the slave of the slave."

Feminism is a worldview counterposed to revolutionary Marxism. Feminists analyze society as gender-based rather than class-based. It is an anti-egalitarian ideology of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois women who support the capitalist system and seek their own power and privilege within it. American feminism has a particularly reactionary history, as many of its founders embraced white supremacy. Early feminists such as Susan B. Anthony opposed the 15th Amendment passed after the Civil War because it provided black freedmen the right to vote rather than white women.

Feminism views anti-woman ideology as just bad thinking and puts forward that what's needed is to spread correct ideas and then maybe people will catch on and stop being bigots. Like black nationalism, feminism is a variant of sectoralism, which means that each oppressed group must organize separately. We oppose sectoralism, which denies the possibility of consciousness transcending an individual's own experience of oppression. We fight to unite the vanguard of all oppressed social layers behind the proletariat in the struggle for socialism. A gross example of the cross-class unity pushed by feminists is the notion that you're in sisterhood with Hillary Clinton, Madeleine Albright and Condoleezza Rice. Bourgeois feminism also perpetuates the false belief that things are getting better for women: Hillary had a shot at the presidency, look at all the Congresswomen, etc.

The truth is that this irrational, boom-bust capitalist profit system is obsolete and must be swept away through socialist revolution. The entry of women into the proletariat opens the way to liberation: their position at the point of production gives them the social power, along with their male co-workers, to smash the capitalist system and lay the basis for women's emancipation through the abolition of class exploitation and the replacement of the institution of the family. As revolutionary Marxists—Trotskyists—we struggle to educate and organize the working class to fight in its own interests and those of all the oppressed, which is the only way it can break its chains.

We fight for the rebirth of the Fourth International, which stands for the emancipation of labor and the oppressed worldwide: Those who labor must rule! The struggle for the expropriation of the parasitic capitalist class is a life-and-death question. Join the fight to build a revolutionary international workers party, a Trotskyist party. For women's liberation through socialist revolution!■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Labor: Fight Union Busting Attack on Rhode Island Teachers!

Central Falls, Rhode Island's poorest city, has become the center of a national war against the teachers unions. When the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers refused Central Falls High School superintendent Frances Gallo's demand that teachers work longer hours and attend training sessions after school without getting paid at union rates, the local school board voted on February 23 to fire all 93 teachers and staff. Outside the board meeting, teachers from around the state turned out by the busload to rally in support of the Central Falls faculty. In a supposed "compromise" currently under discussion, the union has already agreed to longer school days and "more rigorous evaluations and training" (*Washington Post*, 4 March). But even with this agreement, not all the teachers would be rehired.

Speaking in D.C. on March 1, President Barack Obama made a point of endorsing the mass firing, while his Education Secretary, Arne Duncan, "applauded" the school district for "showing courage and doing the right thing for kids." Obama's speech elicited outrage from the teachers unions on up to the top level of the AFL-CIO, which had mobilized union members and spent hundreds of millions in union funds to elect Obama CEO of American capitalism. As a mid-level Houston Federation of Teachers official put it: "We worked hard for this man, we talked to our neighbors and our fellow teachers about why we should support him, and we're having to dig the knife out of our back" (*New York Times*, 7 March).

The firings highlight that Obama's "school reform" program means outright union-busting. In order to get some of the $3.5 billion the government is laying out for "School Turnaround Grants," "failing" schools can choose one of four methods: school closure; takeover by a charter operator; "transformation," which requires a longer school day and other changes; or "turnaround," which means firing the entire staff and rehiring no more than half. One teacher put it succinctly to the *Providence Journal* (24 February): "I think the real goal is to bust the unions."

Central Falls has more children living in poverty than anywhere else in Rhode Island, which has the second-highest unemployment rate in the nation, after Michigan. Of the more than 1,000 students at Central Falls High, 65 percent are Latino, and for many of them English is a second language. The largely Latino population has been subjected to immigration raids and a statewide campaign against undocumented workers. In 2008, some students stopped coming to class because their families had gone into hiding. The area's textile industry has long been dying out. But Central Falls is home to the Wyatt Detention Facility, a private jail that held hundreds of immigrants—including residents of Central Falls—awaiting deportation. A Wyatt detainee, Hiu Lui Ng, a Chinese-born computer engineer, died of untreated cancer and a broken spine in 2008 after months of being denied medical treatment despite excruciating pain.

On the heels of the firings in Central Falls, the *New York Times* (7 March) reported that Boston school officials are forcing staff members at six "underperforming" schools to reapply for their jobs. Dismissing an entire school faculty casts a mold for broader attacks on public workers, who for the first time make up the majority of union members in the U.S., largely due to the erosion of industry and the acquiescence of the pro-capitalist labor tops to the proliferation of non-union shops. Democratic and Republican state governments are using the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression to attack unions and push through layoffs and cuts in wages, benefits and pensions. Some 60,000 teachers were laid off last year alone.

Ertl/NY Times

Getty

February 23: Rhode Island teachers rally in support of Central Falls High School faculty. Left: President Obama defends mass firing of Central Falls teachers at U.S. Chamber of Commerce, March 1.

Having driven public education into the ground, America's racist capitalist rulers blame overworked and underpaid teachers and their unions for the dismal state of schools. The fact is that for decades, public schools in major urban centers and dying industrial towns like Central Falls have been starved of funding by a ruling class that sees no need to educate those whose prospects are prison, the military or mayhe a minimum-wage job. As we wrote in "Education U.S.A.—Separate and Unequal" (*WV* No. 544, 7 February 1992): "The problem for these youth is not in the classroom—it is race and class oppression which deprives them of jobs, housing, health care and every other social service."

As Marxists, we defend secular universal public education as a democratic right. Against the class privilege and race bias that infuse education in this country, we fight for free, quality, integrated education, at all levels. We call to nationalize the private universities and for a state-paid living stipend so working people and the poor can attend. We demand the expansion of remedial programs, which are especially important for students from the decrepit, overcrowded, segregated inner-city schools that are little more than holding cells.

It was no accident that Obama chose Duncan to run point in the drive against public schools and the teachers unions. In January, Duncan declared that Hurricane Katrina was "the best thing that happened to the education system in New Orleans," where all puhlic school teachers and staff were fired and where millions in federal funds went to private charter schools. Duncan was in charge of the Chicago school system from 2001 to 2008, with devastating effect. By his own account, some 60 schools were closed during his reign, primarily in black and minority neighhorhoods, while the number of charter and military schools mushroomed. The Chicago public school system boasts of its *five* military high schools and of a Junior ROTC program that is the largest in the country.

A centerpiece of the bourgeoisie's privatization schemes are charter schools, which are cynically promoted as a solution to the dismal state of education in the ghettos and barrios. In fact, charter schools constitute an attack on public education by siphoning off public funds to privately operated schools. The *New York Times* (7 March), which calls Harlem the "epicenter for charter schools," notes that more than a third of all first-grade students in one Harlem district are in charter schools. The result is that already impoverished public schools are even more starved of funds. Proponents of charters prey on the desperation of parents in the ghettos and barrios to find decent education for their children. But studies show that such schools have actually *increased* racial segregation, *increased* the gap between the education available to inner-city youth and that available to suburhan youth. They have also gone a long way in undermining the separation of church and state by allowing religious outfits to run schools with public funds.

It is in the vital interest of all public workers unions, and of workers more broadly, to mobilize in defense of the fired teachers. Against the rulers' attempts to pit parents against teachers in the name of "school reform," the teachers unions would win wide support from working people and the poor by leading a fight for quality public education for everyone. But to carry out such a struggle requires fighting against the labor bureaucracy's class-collaborationist program of reliance on their Democratic Party "friends" in government.

The day after the mass firing at Central Falls High, American Federation of Teachers head Randi Weingarten could not even bring herself to condemn the school board's action, instead calling it a "failed approach" to school reform. Her primary concern, as she later put it, was "whether Washington, the states and local districts will be partners that help us do our job" (*New York Times*, 7 March). Her successor as president of the New York City teachers union, Michael Mulgrew, promised that the process of removing a teacher could be accelerated after schools chancellor Joel Klein complained that firing "incompetent" teachers was taking too much time (*New York Times*, 23 February).

The disappointment expressed by the labor officialdom over the course taken by the Obama administration is a faint echo of the bitter anger in the working class, which has been clobbered with massive unemployment, home foreclosures and continued attacks on health care and other benefits. Time and again, the union misleaders have sacrificed the interests of workers on the altar of class collaboration with the bosses and their politicians. What is needed is a class-struggle leadership of the unions—one based on the understanding that the interests of working people and the oppressed cannot be reconciled with those of the capitalist rulers. It will take a workers government to rebuild this society—including by providing decent jobs, education and medical care for everyone. To get there we need a workers party dedicated to the overthrow of this decaying capitalist order through socialist revolution.■

WORKERS VANGUARD

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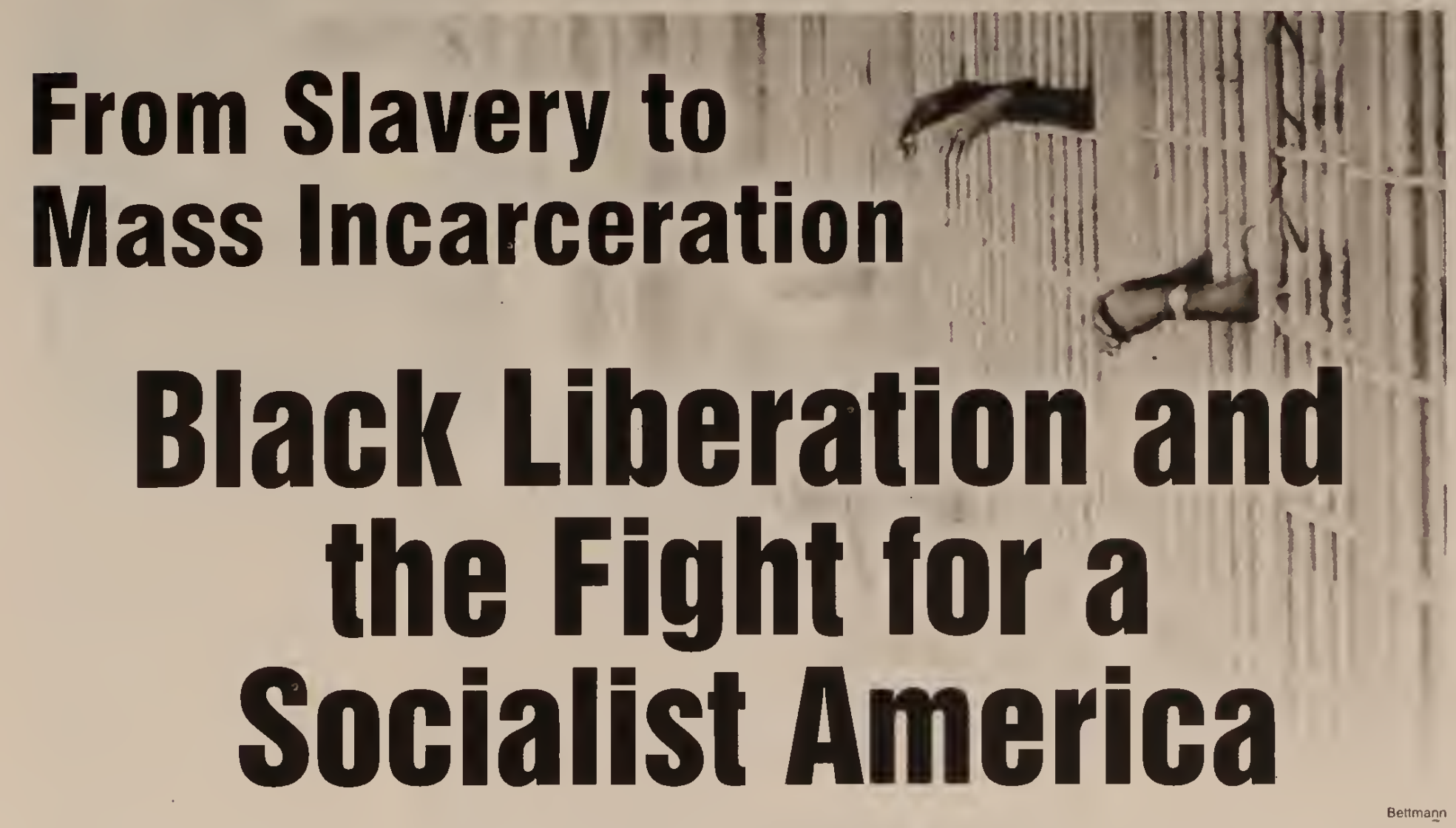
No. 955 | GCU C-701 | 26 March 2010

From Slavery to Mass Incarceration



Black Liberation and the Fight for a Socialist America

Bettmann

We print below, in slightly edited form, a Black History forum given in Oakland, California, on February 27 by Spartacist League Central Committee member Reuben Samuels.

Welcome to Lockdown America. As I speak, over 7.3 million men, women and children are in jail or prison or on parole or probation. The U.S. may not manufacture many automobiles now, but with less than 5 percent of the world's population, it leads with one-quarter of the world's prisoners. There is a direct relation between these two facts, as displayed by the charts showing the steady decline in manufacturing jobs since World War II and the massive increase in the prison population since 1980.

Of the 2.3 million men, women and children behind bars, 70 percent are black or Latino. At the time of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954, 100,000 black people were behind bars. Today there are over 900,000 blacks stuffed into America's overcrowded dungeons. Fifty-five years after *Brown* promised equal educational opportunity, five times as many black men are in prison as in four-year colleges and universities.

Some worry about life after death. For us the question should be, is there life after birth? Death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal was right when he said in his February 7 commentary, "When Young People Are the Enemy": "How a society treats its poorest, least defended children is a measure of its madness." Last August, the *New York Times* (10 August 2009) reported: "About two-thirds of the nation's juvenile inmates...have at least one mental illness, and are more in need of therapy than punishment." One out of every four incarcerated Latino children is held in an adult prison. You're not old enough to screw, drink or buy a cigarette, but you're old enough to be sent away to the state pen, where young prisoners are especially vulnerable to sexual and physical abuse.

Meanwhile, the U.S. prison camp in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, is still open for business, and U.S. imperialism's black Commander-in-Chief Barack Obama has ramped up the number of secret, Special Forces-run, black-site torture chambers for his Afghanistan surge. Transparency, anyone? The esteemed Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821-1881), who saw the inside of tsarist prison camps in Siberian exile, put the question this way in *The House of the Dead*: "The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons." In California, 80 percent of incarcerated women are mothers. Last October the ACLU hailed it as a victory when the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled six to five that a jury should decide if a woman in late-stage labor needs to be shackled to her bed during delivery, a common practice in America's dungeons.

Imprisonment for black males without a high school education tripled between 1978 and 1998 to *59 percent*, whereas the rate for blacks with some college *decreased* from 6 to 5 percent—even though the arrest of Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates Jr. last year demonstrates that the fate of educated black people is anything but secure in racist capitalist America. Nevertheless, those middle-class blacks who have turned their backs on the ghetto poor have found their spokesman in Obama, who disses black fathers with statements like, "what makes you a man is not the ability to have a child—but the courage to raise one." This, as one in four black children by age 14 loses a father to prison.

Last February, Cornel West, the sometime Obama booster, popular hip-hop professor of religion at Princeton and member of the Democratic Socialists of America, ventured down to the Garden State Youth Correctional Facility near Trenton, New Jersey. In the spirit of the newly inaugurated president Obama's hope-hype, he told a select audience of 200 young inmates:

> "In the midst of 244 years of slavery, when they had no control over land, territory, no rights, they held together in the dark and raised their voices to create the spiritual."

He then asked: "You all still listen to the spiritual, don't you?"

We still ain't got no land, no job either, dad's in jail, the bank's got the house, but we've still got spirituals. No wonder Karl Marx called religion the opium of the people—and the pushers in the pulpits do no hard time.

The Civil Rights Movement

Black Columbia University professor Manning Marable, a leader of the Committees of Correspondence, called mass black incarceration "the great moral and political challenge of our time." How to meet this challenge? In an August 2000 piece titled, "Racism, Prisons and the Future of Black America," Marable looks back to:

> "the black freedom struggle of the 1960s [that] was successful largely because it convinced a majority of white middle class Americans that Jim Crow was economically inefficient, and that politically it could not be sustained or justified. The movement utilized the power of creative disruption, making it impossible for the old system of white prejudice and power to function in the same old ways it had for decades."

From the outset, the civil rights movement was dominated by a black middle-class leadership represented by Martin Luther King Jr. The aim of their "creative disruption" was to pressure the Democratic administrations of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson to grant formal, legal equality. They did, in part because Jim Crow had become an embarrassment

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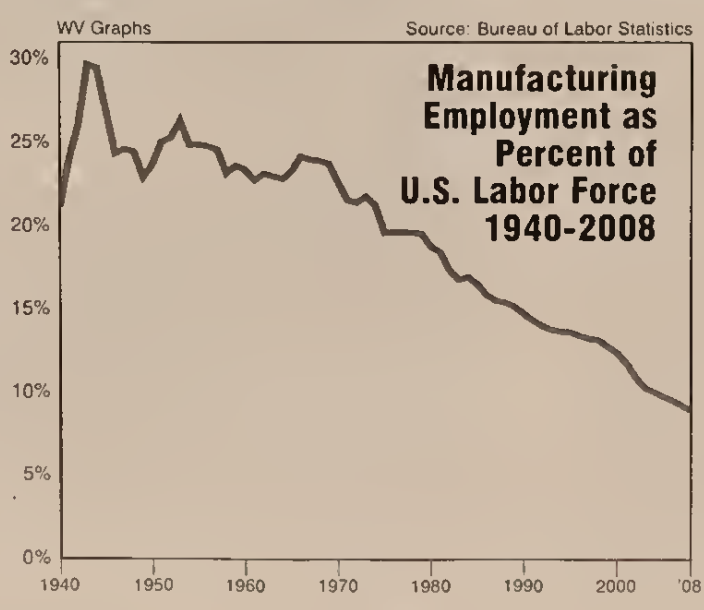

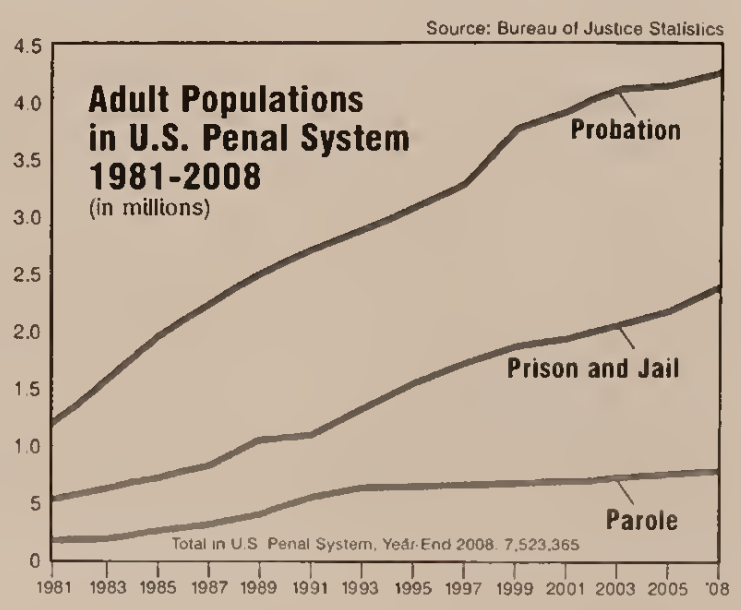

Victory to the British Airways Strike!

Shut Down Heathrow Airport!

London, March 20: Picket line of striking BA workers near London's Heathrow Airport.

Reuters

MARCH 22—As we go to press, an initial three-day strike by British Airways (BA) flight attendants—the first strike by BA's cabin crews in 13 years—has concluded its third day. In response to the company's humiliating demands for massive concessions, another four-day strike by the Unite trade union is slated to begin on March 27. BA is the world's sixth-largest airline and Europe's third-largest. Its main hub, Heathrow Airport, which is 15 miles from central London, is one of the busiest in the world. As a result of the strike, with some 80 percent of the union's 12,000 members walking out, BA has been forced to cancel some 1,100 flights.

The BA strike is one of a series of labor actions in Europe's airline industry. Pilots at TAP Portuguese Airlines are planning to strike for six days beginning March 26, while, in Germany, the Lufthansa pilots union said its members will strike for four days on April 13. Meanwhile, workers in Greece, facing massive assaults on their wages, benefits and working conditions amid the global economic recession, have mobilized for several general strikes over the last month against government austerity plans.

While BA claimed that it had plans to move some 60 percent of its passengers, particularly out of Gatwick Airport, the *Financial Times* (21 March) reported that "Unite said at least 37 of the flights due to fly on Sunday had no passengers and were only being operated to get aircraft to their intended destination abroad so people could be brought back to London on scheduled flights." The strike has certainly had an impact on BA's operations. But there has also been scabbing. As our comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain underlined in a March 19 leaflet, which we reprint below, "To defeat BA's scabbing, solidarity strikes by other airport workers, in defiance of the anti-union laws, are necessary." All BA flights must be grounded. Key to victory are labor solidarity actions, extending to airline and airport workers internationally, including in the U.S.

* * *

A successful strike by cabin crews [flight attendants] at Heathrow Airport is necessary in order to defeat British Airways boss Willie Walsh's union-busting. Twelve thousand BA workers, members of the BASSA division of the Unite union, are set to take three days of strike action from 20 March and another four from the 27th. Walsh would like to gut BA of unions altogether, which means all workers have an interest in supporting the BA strike. What's posed is the very existence of unions at Heathrow Airport, the largest remaining bastion of unionised workers in the country.

The airline industry is reeling from the impact of the current recession: figures for 2009 internationally show the largest decline in passenger traffic since World War II, net losses estimated at $9.4 billion and some 32 airlines going under. With BA making huge losses, last November Walsh imposed major changes on the cabin crew—cutting more than 1,100 jobs—which provoked the strike. In a classic union-busting move, BA plans to put newly recruited crew on lower pay and harsher conditions. Contrary to media lies about a pampered workforce, main cabin crew starting pay is currently £11,000 [about $16,500] a year, rising after 12 years to £20,000. Make no mistake, if Walsh gets away with this attack on the cabin crews he will take it as a green light to go after all unionised workers at Heathrow, including ground staff, maintenance engineers and baggage handlers. This in turn will have a detrimental effect on airline safety.

Walsh has form when it comes to union-busting: before coming to BA in 2005, he ran Aer Lingus in Ireland where he earned the nickname "Slasher" by cutting 2,500 jobs. Walsh would like to turn BA into a long-haul version of notoriously anti-union Ryanair whose chief, Michael O'Leary, egged on BA to "screw the union, lower the costs and lower the fares" (MailOnline, 24 February). Aer Lingus recently announced it will send its cabin crews notices of termination, re-hire them at lower pay and worse conditions and will impose 230 redundancies [layoffs].

The BA cabin crews have shown impressive resolve in taking on the union-busters. After a December strike ballot that showed 92 per cent in favour of striking was invalidated by a court injunction, a new ballot in February won an overwhelming 81 per cent support. On the other side, Walsh & Co. are preparing for war. They have set aside £2 billion to break the strike and are aggressively building up a scab operation that BA claims will enable them to run 60 per cent of flights during the first strike.

To defeat BA's scabbing, solidarity strikes by other airport workers, in defiance of the anti-union laws, are necessary. BA employs 3,000 baggage handlers at Heathrow, and thousands of engineers who service and maintain the aircraft. Without cargo and maintenance, nothing flies. Solid strike action, backed by unionised engineering and ground staff at Heathrow, could bring BA's worldwide operation to a screeching halt and provide a powerful demonstration of what trade unions actually exist for. ***BA cabin crew must not be left to fight alone! Picket lines mean don't cross!***

Workers in the airline industry have tremendous potential power—the world economy cannot function without them. Airline workers internationally, including the Teamsters union in the U.S. as well as public sector union ver.di in Germany and the Australian Transport Workers Union, have pledged to support the BA strikers. Concrete acts of class solidarity across national borders, such as refusing to work scab planes that arrive in other countries, would be of immeasurable help to British workers in their battle against BA. Such internationalism would also stand in powerful contrast to the chauvinist anti-foreigner strikes that have swept Britain's construction sites in the past year demanding "British jobs for British workers," a slogan long associated with the fascists [see "Down With Reactionary Strikes Against Foreign Workers!" *WV* No. 930,

continued on page 5

Lessons of the Paris Commune

TROTSKY

LENIN

March 18 marks the uprising that established the Paris Commune of 1871. In this first example of working-class rule, the proletariat governed the city for 72 days before being crushed by the French army with the support of German forces. Over 20,000 Communards were slaughtered and tens of thousands more imprisoned or deported. In his classic work The State and Revolution, *V. I. Lenin pointed to the lessons drawn from the Paris Commune by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, in particular the need to smash the capitalist state and replace it with the dictatorship of the proletariat, which, on an international scale, would lay the basis for the withering away of the state in a communist society.*

The only "correction" Marx thought it necessary to make to the *Communist Manifesto* he made on the basis of the revolutionary experience of the Paris Communards.

The last preface to the new German edition of the *Communist Manifesto*, signed by both its authors, is dated June 24, 1872. In this preface the authors, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, say that the programme of the *Communist Manifesto* "has in some details become out-of-date," and they go on to say:

> "*...One thing especially was proved by the Commune, viz., that 'the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes.'...*"

The authors took the words that are in single quotation marks in this passage from Marx's book, *The Civil War in France*....

The current, vulgar "interpretation" of Marx's famous statement just quoted is that Marx here allegedly emphasises the idea of slow development in contradistinction to the seizure of power, and so on.

As a matter of fact, ***the exact opposite is the case***. Marx's idea is that the working class must ***breok up, smosh*** the "ready-made state machinery," and not confine itself merely to laying hold of it....

The Commune, therefore, appears to have replaced the smashed state machine "only" by fuller democracy: abolition of the standing army; all officials to be elected and subject to recall. But as a matter of fact this "only" signifies a gigantic replacement of certain institutions by other institutions of a fundamentally different type. This is exactly a case of "quantity being transformed into quality": democracy, introduced as fully and consistently as is at all conceivable, is transformed from bourgeois into proletarian democracy; from the state (= a special force for the suppression of a particular class) into something which is no longer the state proper.

It is still necessary to suppress the bourgeoisie and crush their resistance. This was particularly necessary for the Commune; and one of the reasons for its defeat was that it did not do this with sufficient determination. The organ of suppression, however, is here the majority of the population, and not a minority, as was always the case under slavery, serfdom and wage slavery. And since the majority of the people *itself* suppresses its oppressors, a "special force" for suppression ***is no longer necessary***! In this sense, the state ***begins to wither away***. Instead of the special institutions of a privileged minority (privileged officialdom, the chiefs of the standing army), the majority itself can directly fulfil all these functions, and the more the functions of state power are performed by the people as a whole, the less need there is for the existence of this power.

—V. I. Lenin, *The State and Revolution* (1917)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing dale for news in this issue is March 23.

No. 955 **26 March 2010**

An Orgy of Post-Katrina Bourgeois Reaction

Notes on New Orleans

The following article was written by Joe Vetter, a founding member of the Spartacist League/U.S. and the organizer of the SL's former New Orleans branch.

By Joe Vetter

WV Photo

Above: Demonstrators push past security guards to reclaim their homes at St. Bernard public housing project in New Orleans, April 2006. Below: Residents and supporters protest plans to demolish the housing project, December 2007.

Evan Casper-Futterman

Following Hurricane Katrina's devastating strike on New Orleans in August 2005, the business community and the Bush-Cheney administration saw an opportunity to "change the demographics" of the city. Local businessman James Reiss, chairman of the local Regional Transit Authority and one of the leaders of an exclusive gated community in New Orleans, immediately told the *Wall Street Journal* (8 September 2005): "Those who want to see this city rebuilt want to see it done in a completely different way: demographically, geographically and politically. I'm not just speaking for myself here." That meant cleaning out the public housing projects, and terrorizing, especially, the black population.

Naomi Klein, in *The Shock Doctrine* (Picador, 2007), wrote that while she was at a Baton Rouge shelter later that September, "the news racing round the shelter that day was that Richard Baker, a prominent Republican congressman from this city, had told a group of lobbyists, 'We finally cleaned up public housing in New Orleans. We couldn't do it, but God did'." Klein continued: "Joseph Canizaro, one of New Orleans' wealthiest developers, had just expressed a similar sentiment: 'I think we have a clean sheet to start again. And with that clean sheet we have some very big opportunities'."

Milton Friedman's Free Marketeers

The imperialist endeavors of the U.S. inform government policies at home. Under Bush a section of the State Department was set up to monitor countries where natural disasters (such as tsunamis) or man-made disasters (wars like Iraq) had created a big enough shock to create "opportunities" to force the implementation of "free market" economic reforms. This section of the State Department continues to exist under Obama, who declared during the 2008 presidential campaign, "I am a pro-growth, free market guy. I love the market." Borrowing from the "free market" model, public housing near the French Quarter was hungrily eyed as land that could be used for the development of luxury hotels and housing. This followed the lead, too, of former president Bill Clinton's Secretary for Housing and Urban Development, Henry Cisneros, who got the ball rolling with the destruction of public housing projects like Cabrini Green in Chicago.

Milton Friedman himself literally got up from his deathbed to write an op-ed for the *Wall Street Journal* (5 December 2005), noting that "most New Orleans schools are in ruins" and that this was "an opportunity" for privatizing the school system in New Orleans. The privatization was done with great speed, making most of the schools in New Orleans into private charter schools. There are only four public schools left controlled by the elected school board, while most public school teachers have been fired, decimating the union. Friedman called for the distribution of vouchers to make it possible for parents to send their kids to any school of their choice. In New Orleans this mostly means the notoriously bad Catholic schools, where the teaching staff have little or no educational training and are grossly underpaid (in the name of service to the church and "his holy father" the Pope).

Milton Freidman and his "Chicago Boys" were the architects of the "shock treatment" mass unemployment and starvation in Chile following Pinochet's bloody military coup in 1973. In "Behind Friedmania" (*WV* No. 260, 11 July 1980), we pointed out: "*Business Week* (12 January 1976), hardly an organ of liberal protest, recognized that only a brutal military dictatorship could impose the Friedmanite economic model: 'Because a drastic cut in government outlays often triggers a sharp jump in unemployment, the almost inevitable result is labor unrest. Countries that try the cold-turkey approach to inflation therefore tend, like Brazil and Chile to be regimes that use police power to contain the social fallout of these economic policies'."

In New Orleans today, many hospitals are still closed. Hundreds of people are suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome and are unable to get help. This is the Friedmanite shock therapy that has been created.

Naomi Klein points out in *The Shock Doctrine*:

> "On September 13, 2005—fourteen days after the levees were breached—the Heritage Foundation hosted a meeting of like-minded ideologues and Republican lawmakers. They came up with a list of 'Pro-Free-Market Ideas for Responding to Hurricane Katrina and High Gas Prices'—thirty-two policies in all, each one straight out of the Chicago School playbook, and all of them packaged as 'hurricane relief.' The first three items were 'automatically suspend Davis-Bacon prevailing wage laws in disaster areas,' a reference to the law that required federal contractors to pay a living wage; 'make the entire affected area a flat-tax free-enterprise zone'; and 'make the entire region an economic competitiveness zone (comprehensive tax incentives and waiving of regulations)'... All these measures were announced by President Bush within the week."

To ease the way for the rebuilding of the state power by repression, the race card was played and a media offensive was launched against "looting." Whites were described as "resourceful" and blacks as "looters." Eddie Compass (then chief of police) appeared on *Oprah* attributing the most heinous crimes to the people trapped in the Louisiana Superdome and the Convention Center. Mayor Ray Nagin called the trapped people "animalistic." Claims of looting and crime were picked up by every major media outlet, and retailed as fact in *The Tin Roof Blowdown*, a best-selling Dave Robicheaux novel by James Lee Burke. But after the crisis passed, a *Times-Picayune* reporter investigated the rumors and found no truth in them.

MSNBC

Guantánamo on the Gulf Coast: New Orleans "Camp Greyhound," jail facility built by prisoners from Angola state penitentiary in the days after Hurricane Katrina hit.

Camp Greyhound

The blog "dystopolitik" (May 2008) states, "Pentagon planners, and military officials are using Katrina data to conduct war-games of future domestic scenarios, according to *Army Times*." On the ground, upon entering New Orleans a few days after Katrina, Brigadier General Gary Jones, commander of the Louisiana National Guard's Joint Task Force, said, "This place is going to look like little Somalia." In bourgeois parlance that means a "failed state." With that comment the mission of the military was clarified: The rescue operation was a far distant second to the repression of the city. People actively engaged in rescue work, even actor Sean Penn, were attacked as in the way. As military checkpoints were set up, Jones further said, "This will be a combat operation to get this city under control."

A recent book by Dave Eggers, *Zeitoun* (McSweeney's Books, 2009), tells one family's ordeal. It is the story of how New Orleans painting contractor Abdulrahman Zeitoun stayed behind to watch over his and his clients' properties in the flood, feeding trapped dogs and rescuing people with his canoe. One day his wife and children, who had driven out, suddenly lost touch with him, finally to discover after weeks of agony that he had been seized and dumped into the notorious "Camp Greyhound."

This "camp" was built using hundreds of prisoners from Angola state penitentiary, creating a mazé of wire cages topped with razor wire on the parking lot of the Greyhound bus station. It was made so that one guard could watch everyone at once, with no privacy for the prisoners, who were forced to sleep on the dirty bare asphalt. If the prisoners moved too near the fencing, they were sprayed with pepper gas and then doused with water several minutes later (to prevent visible blistering). Many routinely had plastic bags placed over their heads to simulate smothering, like waterboarding, a long-standing torture method of the New Orleans Police Department. No one was ever told the charges against them. No prisoner was allowed to see a lawyer or make a phone call. This prison resembled Guantánamo Bay or the "black site" at Bagram Air Force base in Afghanistan. Some military personnel referred to New Orleans as New Oraq, or Baghdad by the Bayou.

The warden from Angola prison oversaw the construction of Camp Greyhound and said that this was the first step in the rebuilding of New Orleans: "You can't

continued on page 10

Parliamentary Cretinism and Class Collaboration

Canada: A Prorogue's Gallery

A part of the British Commonwealth, Canada is subordinate to the British monarchy, whose representative, the governor-general, has the power to suspend the Canadian parliament, as happened in December at Canadian prime minister Stephen Harper's request. The following article about this question originally appeared in Spartacist Canada *No. 164 (Spring 2010), newspaper of the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste, Canadian section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).*

SPARTACIST CANADA

On January 23, more than 20,000 people in many Canadian cities protested against the suspension (prorogation) of parliament by governor-general Michaëlle Jean at the behest of Tory prime minister Stephen Harper. These protests, called in the name of "Canadians Against Proroguing Parliament" (CAPP), were backed by the capitalist Liberal Party of Canada, the NDP [New Democratic Party] social democrats and a variety of reformist left groups. Prominent among the latter were the International Socialists (I.S.). They helped organize and build the Toronto demo and one of their leading members made CAPP's money pitch from the platform. While Liberal heavies like Bob Rae worked the Liberal/NDP crowd in Toronto, the Ottawa rally was addressed by both Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff and NDP leader Jack Layton.

A central demand of these protests was that parliament "get back to work." But the "work" of parliament is to ensure the continued exploitation of the working class and the supremacy of private property. Job one when parliament does "get back to work" will be to continue making the working class pay for the capitalist economic crisis; the Tories are planning massive spending cuts, including an expected assault on the pensions of government workers.

Unlike our reformist opponents, we Marxists do not uphold the "sanctity" of parliament, though we certainly oppose its arbitrary curtailment by the executive power of the capitalist state. We also call for the immediate abolition of the monarchy, the governor-general and the unelected Senate—no mere relics but rallying points for social reaction.

The fake left's embrace of this "movement" to recall parliament reflects their deeply reformist view that the capitalist state can be administered in the interests of the workers and oppressed, especially if the NDP is helping to run it. In contrast, we recognize that the capitalist state must be smashed through proletarian revolution and replaced with workers councils (soviets), organs of working-class power.

Our defense of bourgeois-democratic rights is closely linked to combatting illusions in the "democratic" trappings of this unjust social system. V. I. Lenin, leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution, captured the essence of capitalist democracy in a scathing attack on the reformist enemies of Soviet Russia, the world's first workers state: "The working people are *barred* from participation in bourgeois parliaments (they *never decide* important questions under bourgeois democracy, which are decided by the stock exchange and the banks) by thousands of obstacles" (*The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* [1918]).

We thus do not, on principle, run for or accept executive offices, from mayor to president. In parliaments and other legislative bodies, communist deputies can, as ***oppositionists***, serve as revolutionary tribunes of the working class. But assuming executive office or gaining control of a bourgeois legislative or municipal council, either independently or in coalition, requires taking responsibility for the administration of the machinery of the capitalist state, including its corrupt, violent, racist police forces (see "Down With Executive Offices of the Capitalist State! Marxist Principles and Electoral Tactics," *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 61, Spring 2009).

The Harper government's latest suspension of parliament is a very real violation of bourgeois-democratic norms. But consider the history of the parliamentary parties that paraded in the streets. It was the Liberal government of Mackenzie King that interned Japanese Canadians during World War II, a racist atrocity backed by the NDP's predecessors, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation. Pierre Trudeau's Liberals imposed martial law in Quebec in 1970 and Jean Chrétien's Liberals, backed by the NDP, imposed the Clarity Act, which effectively bans Quebec from exercising its democratic right to self-determination. Federally or provincially; Tory, Liberal or NDP; the bosses' parliamentary governments wage incessant attacks on workers and the oppressed on behalf of the exploiters.

When Chrétien prorogued parliament (four times), the fake left raised no hue and cry. Now, mired in their typical "fight the right" opportunism, the reformist Communist Party (CP) declared that "this movement to 'get Parliament back to work' can help spark a powerful campaign to block and defeat the Harper Tories" (January 7 statement). The CP's "anybody but Harper" sentiment—shared, if expressed less crudely, by the entire reformist left—can only be read as an endorsement of the bourgeois Liberals or at best the NDP.

Spartacist Canada

January 23: Toronto protest against suspension of parliament. Reformist left blocked with bourgeois Liberals and NDP social democrats, breeding illusions in capitalist "democracy."

In that same "fight the right" spirit, the I.S. begged the NDP to "step it up" so as "to make a difference to the outcome of this fight." Blaring "Make Harper Pay," the I.S. pleaded that "the union movement, social justice organizations, anti-war activists, environmentalists and socialists must go all-out to make this movement as big and as militant as possible" (*Socialist Worker*, January 2010). This is a blatant call on workers to join hands with their capitalist exploiters for the purpose of running the capitalist state. In this the I.S. repeats their bowing to the Liberal-NDP coalition a year earlier. We said that this class-collaborationist alliance was an enemy of the interests of the working class.

Also agonizing over the role of their cherished NDP was Fightback, the Canadian group of Alan Woods' International Marxist Tendency. Noting the presence of the bourgeois Liberals at the anti-prorogation rallies, Fightback worried that "if the movement continues in its present class collaborationist formation, with demands acceptable to the Liberals, then it will go nowhere." They recommended fighting "against the dictatorship of the bosses and for a genuine socialist workers' democracy" (marxist.ca, 26 January). Yet what they mean by this is to call on the NDP, in which they are buried, to take power "on a socialist program." But the Canadian state is a *bourgeois* state. Putting the NDP at the helm of this state is the antithesis of a genuine socialist program, i.e., workers revolution to smash the capitalist state and replace it with the dictatorship of the proletariat, the necessary foundation for any regime based on workers democracy.

According to Fightback, "the NDP and the unions need to put themselves at the head of this movement and extend it beyond the issue of prorogation." The NDP is a bourgeois workers party, based in part on affiliation with workers unions but committed to a thoroughly pro-capitalist program. Contrary to Fightback, the only reason the NDP social democrats "put themselves at the head" of any social struggle is to derail and confine it to what is acceptable to the capitalist rulers.

The "Marxist" pretensions of the I.S., Fightback et al. are an utter fraud. This is best illustrated by their cheering on (and in some cases participating in) the capitalist-restorationist movements which destroyed the bureaucratically deformed/degenerated workers states of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Under cover of defending the same classless (i.e., bourgeois) "democracy" they tout today, they joined in the imperialists' "human rights" crusade, the sole aim of which was capitalist counterrevolution. They have the same attitude towards China, by far the strongest of the remaining bureaucratically deformed workers states, where the return of capitalism would be a gigantic defeat for China's worker and peasant masses for whom the 1949 Chinese Revolution has brought tremendous social gains. In contrast, we Trotskyists stand for the unconditional military defense of China, as well as the other deformed workers states—Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam—against imperialism and internal counterrevolution, while calling for the overthrow of the bureaucratic Stalinist misrulers through workers political revolution.

Down With Anglo Chauvinism! Independence for Quebec!

The recent suspension of parliament has its immediate origins in the Tories' attempts to deflect anger over the well-established fact that the Canadian military in Afghanistan has been routinely handing over prisoners to their Afghan puppet allies for torture. At a more fundamental level, however, the inability of the ruling class to "solve" the Quebec national question has produced a structurally dysfunctional parliamentary system. Variously using military repression and threats, economic blackmail, compromises, cajoling, insults and more threats, the Anglo-chauvinist rulers are dead set on maintaining the French-speaking Québécois as an oppressed nation within a unitary Canadian state. This is the fundamental fault line of the reactionary "Canadian confederation."

Following the collapse of the 1987 Meech Lake accord and the 1995 referendum which came close to victory for the side of Quebec sovereignty, the Québécois have repeatedly voted for a majority of bourgeois-nationalist Bloc Québécois MPs [Members of Parliament]. Since 2004, this has produced a series of weak minority governments in Ottawa, which worries the anglophone ruling class. Outside Canada, even that haughty mouthpiece of British capital, the *Economist*, has brooded about Canada's "deadlocked politics."

What is decisive for Marxists, though, is the fact that Canada's protracted split along national lines has created a deep divide within the working class, pitting working people of English Canada and Quebec against one another instead of the capitalist rulers. As we recognized prior to the 1995 referendum, the only foreseeable way forward is for revolutionaries to advocate Quebec independence. By getting the national question off the agenda, workers of both nations will see more clearly that their true enemies are their "own" capitalist bosses, and not one another.

The English Canadian union tops and NDP have long been virulently hostile to Quebec's national rights. They have lined up behind the Canadian ruling class whenever the Québécois seriously tried to assert their right to self-determination, including in the 1995 referendum. Such

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Vanunu Slams Nobel War Prize

The International Communist League has always honored and defended former Israeli nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu. In 1986, Vanunu exposed to the world that the Israeli Zionist rulers had produced enough nuclear weapons and delivery systems not only to incinerate every Arab capital but to bomb major cities in the Soviet Union as well. For his service to humanity, he was kidnapped in Italy by Israeli Mossad agents, whisked back to Israel, tried before a secret military court and then locked away in prison for 18 years—12 of them spent in solitary confinement.

Now, Vanunu has ripped the veil of hypocrisy from the bourgeoisie's venerated Nobel Peace Prize, for which he had been nominated. In a February 24 announcement, Geir Lundestad, Director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute, revealed that for the second consecutive year Vanunu wrote letters "where he stated explicitly that he did not want to be a candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize. The reason he gave was that Simon [sic] Peres had received the Nobel Peace Prize, and Peres he alleged was the father of the Israeli atomic bomb and he did not want to be associated with Peres in any way." In one of these letters, Vanunu wrote that "Peres was the man who ordered the kidnapping of me in Italy."

Shimon Peres, whose paternity of Israel's nuclear arsenal is well documented in his 2007 authorized biography by Michael Bar-Zohar, shared the 1994 "peace" prize with his fellow Labor Party leader Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian Liberation Organization leader Yasir Arafat for their role in negotiating the 1993 Oslo accords. This imperialist-brokered pact was portrayed as laying the foundation for a Palestinian "mini-state" in part of the territories occupied by Israel in 1967. In fact, it has led only to greater oppression, impoverishment, terrorization and degradation for the Palestinians. For his part, Peres, an early supporter of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, has the blood of countless Palestinians on his hands. He was Israel's prime minister twice, and during his second reign ordered the 1996 attack on a UN refugee camp near the southern Lebanese village of Qana in which over 100 civilians were slaughtered.

Vanunu is the first nominee to request that his name be withdrawn from consideration. But in 1973, Vietnam's Le Duc Tho refused to accept the "peace" prize. It had been jointly awarded to him and Henry Kissinger, the National Security Advisor for the U.S. imperialists, who had the blood of over three million Vietnamese on their hands. In refusing to remove Vanunu's name from the list of nominees, Lundestad made clear that Vanunu had little chance of winning. Not surprising, since the award is a model of Orwellian "war is peace" Newspeak.

Peace Prize recipients have included Elihu Root, U.S. Secretary of War during the Spanish-American War through which the U.S. colonized Cuba and Puerto Rico and then occupied the Philippines, slaughtering up to a million people; Charles Dawes, architect of the imperialist victors' reparations that bled Germany following World War I; Columbia University president Nicholas Murray Butler, an early supporter of Italian fascist Benito Mussolini and Hitler's Nazis; United Nations general secretary Dag Hammarskjöld, who was involved in the assassination of Congo nationalist Patrice Lumumba; Menachem Begin, who had been a leader of the Zionist terrorist Irgun which carried out bloody slaughter and mass expulsions of Palestinians in the 1940s; and U.S. president Jimmy Carter, who came to office with appeals for "ethnic purity" and engineered U.S. imperialism's funding and arming of the reactionary, woman-hating Afghan *mujahedin* in their war against the Soviet-backed Afghan government.

The most recent honoree is U.S. Commander-in-Chief Barack Obama, who seemed to be rewarded for not being George W. Bush, though his acceptance speech differed little from a Bush presentation, except for its sophistication. Obama invoked the virtues of a "just war" in defense of a barbaric occupation that has resulted in the deaths of untold thousands of Afghans and the pounding of villages through aerial bombardment. He also took the occasion to rattle sabers at capitalist Iran and the North Korean deformed workers state for their work toward developing nuclear capability in defiance of imperialist threats and sanctions.

Since his release from Israel's dungeons in 2004, Vanunu has been barred from leaving the country, talking to non-Israelis, going near airports and is under 24-hour surveillance. Last December he was placed under house arrest after meeting a Norwegian woman in a Jerusalem hotel (see *WV* No. 950, 15 January). As Vanunu recently wrote to a Norwegian journalist, "What I want now, I need now, is freedom, passport, not any awards." Hands off Mordechai Vanunu! Let him leave Israel!

BA Strike...

(continued from page 2)

13 February 2009]. ***Down with nationalist protectionism! For international working-class solidarity with BA strikers!***

In August 2005, BA ground crews showed their immense power by striking against the mass sacking of over 600 Gate Gourmet catering workers. This "unofficial" strike defied the anti-union laws and brought Heathrow to a standstill, snarling up BA operations and costing them over £40 million. However the union leadership under Tony Woodley of the TGWU (now part of Unite) scandalously repudiated the strike as "unlawful" and left the sacked Gate Gourmet workers, who were mainly Asian women, out to dry [see "Wildcat Strike Protests Mass Sackings at Heathrow," *WV* No. 853, 2 September 2005]. Today the Unite leadership is bending over backwards to capitulate to BA, volunteering their own package of cuts and begging Walsh to put his last offer back on the table. They have even agreed that workers will fork out an extra £37 million a year to cover a gaping hole in the BA pension fund!

Bleatings of David Cameron's Tories aside, the fact that Unite bankrolls the Labour Party doesn't prevent the Labour government from kicking the union in the teeth. Labour's transport secretary Lord Adonis has viciously condemned the strikes as "totally unjustified" while [Prime Minister] Gordon Brown said a strike at BA would be "deplorable." But only an inveterate Labourite reformist would whine, as *Socialist Worker* (20 March) did, that Brown "should be attacking BA chief executive Willie Walsh." Fat chance. While Old Labour governments routinely sided with the bosses against striking workers, New Labour prides itself on its loyalty to the bankers and bosses and its hostility to the unions. New Labour set out to sever the party's links to the trade unions, which would transform it from a reformist party (i.e., one with a working-class base but a pro-capitalist programme) into an outright bourgeois party like the U.S. Democratic Party. This process remains incomplete because the party is dependent on union funds, but Labour is moribund as a reformist party.

Behind the condemnation of the strikers by Adonis and Brown stands the state, which has at its disposal a welter of anti-union laws and the courts and cops to enforce them. What the workers have is their numbers, their organisation and the power to halt the industry, hitting the bosses in the bottom line. But what is needed to unleash this power is a political battle against the sell-out Unite leadership.

For the members of the Unite union it must surely rankle that their dues have been funding the Labour Party to the tune of £11 million in the past four years, which amounts to "feeding the hand that bites them." But the union bureaucracy is tied hand and foot to the capitalist order and would gladly scupper [wreck] the strike in the interests of re-electing this rotten Labour government. When the cabin crews originally announced a 12-day strike over Christmas, Unite co-leader Derek Simpson stabbed his membership in the back by publicly condemning their strike proposal as "over the top." The bitter enmity between Unite co-leaders Derek Simpson and Tony Woodley is palpable, but *all* wings of the bureaucracy are cringingly subservient to the Labour Party. Unite's "political director" is Charlie Whelan, a former spin doctor for Gordon Brown.

With an election for Unite general secretary in the offing, the supposed "left" candidate is Jerry Hicks, formerly union convenor at Rolls Royce, who outdid Unite bureaucrats Simpson and Woodley in his support for the protectionist strikes for "British jobs for British workers" last year. Hicks stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the Socialist Party [affiliated with Socialist Alternative in the U.S.], which was part of the leadership of the anti-foreigner strikes at Lindsey oil refinery. The Lindsey strike launched a crusade that saw foreign workers removed from a site in Wales and being denied jobs at many other building sites in a racist climate that has been a gift to the fascist BNP.

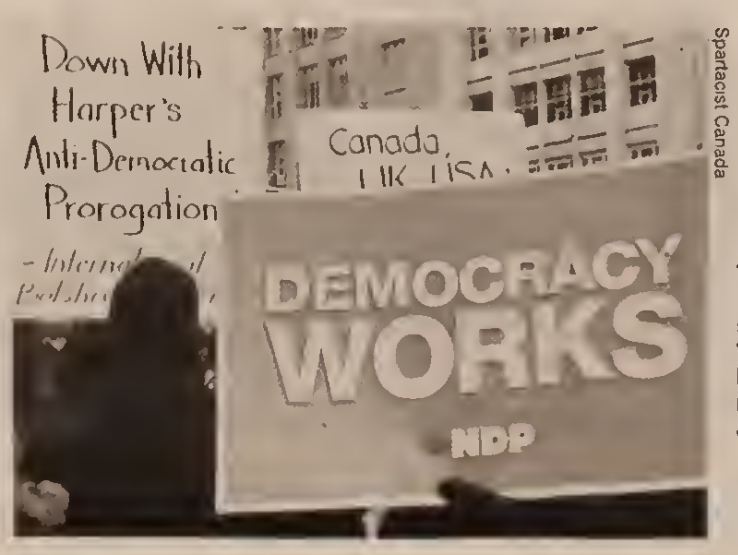
We told the truth: those strikes are poison to the interests of the multiethnic working class in Britain and workers throughout Europe. We say no vote to any of these traitors in the Unite election and no vote to Labour in the general election. The unions must oppose chauvinist "British workers first" protectionism as well as the "war on terror"—which targets Muslims—as well as all other racist divide-and-rule ploys. What's needed is to mobilise the multiethnic working class *against* Gordon Brown's Labour government in a fight for jobs for *all*, through a shorter work week with no loss in pay, and to undertake a union organising drive to draw into their ranks all of the working class, including its minority and immigrant components. In the heat of hard class struggle, workers must replace the Labourite cringers atop the unions with a class-struggle leadership as part and parcel of the fight for a multiethnic revolutionary workers party that will fight for a socialist revolution to establish a workers government.

Victory to the BA strikers!■

Anglo chauvinism has served to drive the once-militant Québécois working class into the arms of their "own" national exploiters, represented by the Bloc and Parti Québécois.

The reformist left capitulates to the Anglo chauvinists of the NDP in English Canada and, in some cases, to the bourgeois nationalists in Quebec, depending on where their immediate opportunist appetites lie. The Communist Party and Fightback oppose independence outright and cover their straight capitulation to Anglo chauvinism with empty "unite-and-fight" rhetoric (see "'Fightback' and the Quebec National Question," *SC* No. 162, Fall 2009 [reprinted in *WV* No. 943, 25 September 2009]). Others, such as Socialist Action, favour Quebec independence, but only as a means to ingratiate themselves with "left" Québécois bourgeois nationalists. Today their chosen vehicle for this is the left-nationalist Québec Solidaire, a petty-bourgeois formation that does not even pay lip service to socialism.

Along with Fightback and the CP, the grotesquely misnamed Bolshevik Tendency is another staunch "left" defender of "Canadian unity." In line with their sneering contempt for all forms of special oppression, the BT openly opposes independence for Quebec. Notoriously, the BT has the dubious distinction of being *the* "socialists" officially invited to a Montreal "Canadian unity" rally organized by business groups on the eve of the 1995 referendum on Quebec sovereignty! More recently, a BT contingent blended right into the flag-waving January prorogation protest in Toronto—none of their placards breathed a word of criticism against the ruling-class Liberal Party, let alone the social-democratic NDP. The BT is an integral part of the syphilitic chain of pro-capitalist reformism.



Spartacist Canada

Bolshevik Tendency (far left) blends seamlessly into "get Parliament back to work" rally, Toronto, January 23.

While workers and the oppressed must oppose ruling-class attacks on bourgeois-democratic rights, they must do so by their own methods and under their own independent banner. As we said in our 22 December 2008 supplement, "Liberal-NDP Coalition: Tool of the Bosses" (*SC* No. 160, Spring 2009):

> "The Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste is fighting to build the nucleus of a revolutionary Marxist party that can root itself in the working class. Taking up the cause of all the oppressed, such a party would give conscious leadership to the struggles of the workers not only to improve their present conditions but to do away with the entire system of capitalist wage slavery. 'Unity' with the oppressors, or with their social-democratic political agents, is the road to defeat. The only way to smash the all-sided assault on social programs, to assure free quality medical care, childcare and jobs and decent living standards for all, to end the neocolonial pillage of the Third World, is by ripping the productive forces from the hands of the capitalist class through socialist revolution and putting them in the hands of those whose labour makes society run."■

Incarceration...

(continued from page 1)

to U.S. imperialism's posture as the defender of "democracy" against the Soviet degenerated workers state.

The bankruptcy of the civil rights movement's leadership and its liberal program was revealed when the movement went North, where black people already had formal legal equality. As the French writer Anatole France wrote about legal equality in the late 19th century: "The law, in its majestic equality, forbids the rich as well as the poor to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets, and to steal bread." The struggle for a fundamental change in conditions of life in the ghettos—for real equality, jobs, decent housing and adequate schools—collided head-on with the economic realities of American capitalism.

Revolutionary Integrationism

From slavery to convict labor, from the chain gang to the assembly line, American capitalism has been built upon the lash-scarred backs of black labor. Any organization that claims a revolutionary perspective for the United States must confront the *special oppression* of black people—their forced segregation at the bottom of capitalist society and the poisonous racism that divides the working class and cripples its struggles.

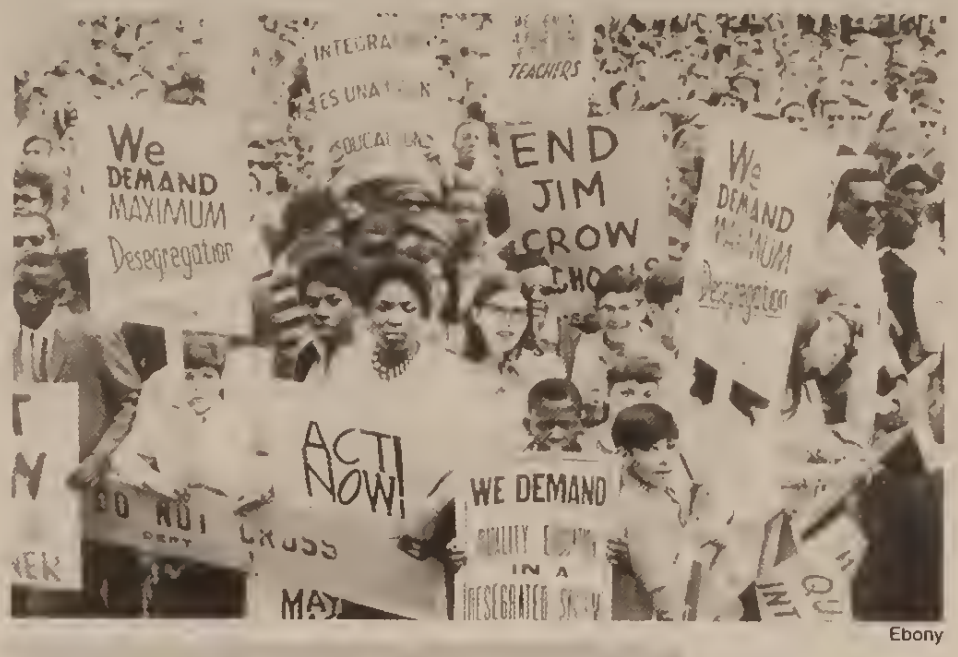
Counterposed to liberal integrationism, which holds that black equality can be achieved within the American capitalist system of racial subjugation and ruthless labor exploitation, we advocate *revolutionary integrationism*: the understanding that black freedom requires smashing the capitalist system and constructing an egalitarian socialist society. This perspective is also counterposed to petty-bourgeois black nationalism and black capitalism, an ideology of defeatism that would deny blacks their birthright: *the wealth and culture their labor has played a decisive role in creating*. As Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky told his American supporters in 1939: "We must say to the conscious elements of the Negroes that they are convoked by the historic development to become a vanguard of the working class."

Early America and Slavery

The capitalist ruling class is also acutely aware of this fact. Shortly after this republic was founded, the black slaves of the French colony that is now Haiti, roused by the French Revolution, were organized into an armed force that won their freedom by defeating Europe's mightiest armies, inspiring slave rebellions throughout the Americas.

Since then, if not before, America's rulers have been haunted by the spectre of black insurrection and social revolution. The payback to Haiti was 200 years of political isolation, economic depredation and military occupation. The response at home: the incarceration and criminalization of black people that is woven into the very fabric of this country.

In 1793, the same year that slavery was abolished in Haiti, Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin in the U.S., which would vastly expand both the scope and the profitability of the Southern plantation-based slave economy. The surplus value extracted through the oldest form of exploitation would fuel the birth of industrial capitalism in the U.S. and, with it, capitalism's gravedigger, the proletariat.



Ebony

Elliot Erwitt

Above: Civil rights protests in 1950s and 1960s helped shatter Jim Crow segregation but could not attack roots of racial oppression in American capitalism. Left: Segregated drinking fountains, North Carolina, 1950.

Also in 1793, Congress passed the first national crime bill, the Fugitive Slave Act. The law fleshed out the slave-catching clause in Article 4, Section 2, of the recently ratified U.S. Constitution—that very document that President Obama as a candidate claimed "had at its very core the ideal of equal citizenship under the law."

The Bourgeois State and the Civil War

The instrument for criminalization and incarceration is the state, an instrument of organized violence for the suppression of one class by another. Friedrich Engels explained in *Origins of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884) that the state consists "not merely of armed men [like the police and army], but also of material adjuncts, prisons, and institutions of coercion of all kinds." Writing at the dawn of modern imperialism, he described how this state or public power

> "grows stronger, however to the extent that class antagonisms within the state become exacerbated and adjacent states become larger and more populous. We have only to look at our present-day Europe, where class struggle and competition for conquests have raised the public power to such a level that it threatens to swallow the whole of society and even the state."

By the time Engels was writing, he could have added the United States. How apt that Thomas Hobbes, writing in 1660 after the English Civil War, named his classic work on the state, *The Leviathan*, after the most diabolical of biblical monsters. No exploiting class but the bourgeoisie has built such monstrous institutions of coercion, suppression and destruction—this Leviathan that swallows up the whole of society—in order to struggle to the death to avoid leaving the stage of history.

It was not words of eloquent moral suasion, or freedom protests and petitions or "creative disruption" that crushed the slaveowning Confederacy in the Civil War, but the Union Army—two and a half million strong, including the decisive mobilization of 200,000 black soldiers and sailors. The Civil War—the Second American Revolution—was the last of the world's great bourgeois revolutions that began with the English Civil War of the 17th century and included the French Revolution of the 18th century.

Reconstruction and Betrayal

Yet the Civil War was a *bourgeois* revolution, with all the contradictions that implies. A barbaric and archaic system of exploitation had been overthrown. But what would replace slavery? The ensuing period of Radical Reconstruction, imposed on the South with Union army bayonets, was the most democratic and egalitarian period in American history. Public schools were established where previously it had been a crime punishable by death to teach blacks to read and write. It gave us the Fourteenth Amendment, ratified in 1868, which overturned the notorious 1857 *Dred Scott* Supreme Court decision that declared blacks "so far inferior that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect."

But Northern capital eyed the devastated South not as a laboratory for a radical-democratic experiment, but as an opportunity to profitably exploit Southern resources and cheap labor. Cotton was still king in the South and Northern textile mills obtained nearly all their cotton from the South, from which they produced $100 million worth of cloth a year.

The Compromise of 1877, which withdrew the last Union troops from the South, sealed the betrayal of black freedom. Reconstruction governments were overthrown and in the late 19th century replaced with governments based on Jim Crow lynch law terror. The precise number of lynchings will never be known. One generally accepted figure is that of the 3,943 lynchings between 1880 and 1930, 3,220, or 82 percent, had black victims.

The death penalty, where judges in black robes supplant racist mobs in white sheets, is the lynch rope made legal. A suit brought before the Supreme Court by black Georgia death row prisoner Warren McCleskey showed that black people in Georgia convicted of killing whites were sentenced to death *22 times* more frequently than those convicted of killing blacks. In rejecting McCleskey's appeal in 1987, the Supreme Court openly acknowledged that to accept his premise would throw "into serious question the principles that underlie our entire criminal justice system." We can all agree with that. *McCleskey* has been called the *Dred Scott* decision of our time. We say: ***Abolish the racist death penalty!***

Class War vs. Convict Lease

To recreate the cheap labor so coveted by Northern and Southern capital, the freed slave had to be forced back into bondage, especially on the plantations. The 13th Amendment to the Constitution, which codified emancipation, also contained the exception with which to forge new chains for the freed black:

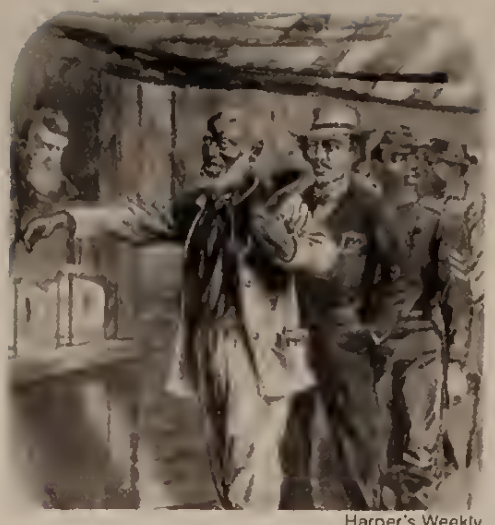
> "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, *except* as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States." [emphasis added]

Under that exception, every former slave state passed a plethora of laws that criminalized vagrancy, loitering, gambling, using "obscene language," homosexuality, bigamy, "miscegenation." These were punishable by long sentences or a fine so high no poor man could pay it, so that the convict was "leased out" for a

Bettmann

Library of Congress

Left: Scarred back of slave. Right: Soldiers of 107th U.S. Colored Infantry at Fort Corcoran near Washington. Nearly 200,000 black Union soldiers and sailors helped turn tide of Civil War.



Harper's Weekly

Frederick Douglass House

Left: Southern black men voting in 1867, during Reconstruction period. Right: Frederick Douglass, pre-eminent revolutionary abolitionist.

term of labor to pay off the fine.

As an 1892 letter published in the Washington, D.C. *Evening Star* pointed out:

> "The lease system brings the state a revenue and relieves it of the cost of building and maintaining prisons. The fact that the convicts labor is in this way brought into direct competition with free labor does not seem to be taken into account. The contractors, who get these laborers for 30 or 40 cents per day, can drive out of the market the man who employs free labor at $1 a day."
>
> —Quoted in Ida B. Wells, ed., *The Reason Why the Colored American Is Not in the World's Columbian Exposition* (1893)

Just as slave labor in the Caribbean helped fuel the industrial revolution in England, it was convict labor that would lay the foundation for the growth of industry in the South (even as the South remained largely agricultural). Slavery was inhuman. But as the chattel slave was an expensive piece of "property," there were some economic deterrents to the regular use of the most extreme forms of plantation brutality. No such limit existed for convict labor. According to David M. Oshinsky's *Worse Than Slavery* (1997), much of the railroad system in the South was built by leased convicts packed in rolling iron cages moved from job to job, working in such hellish conditions that they rarely survived past two years.

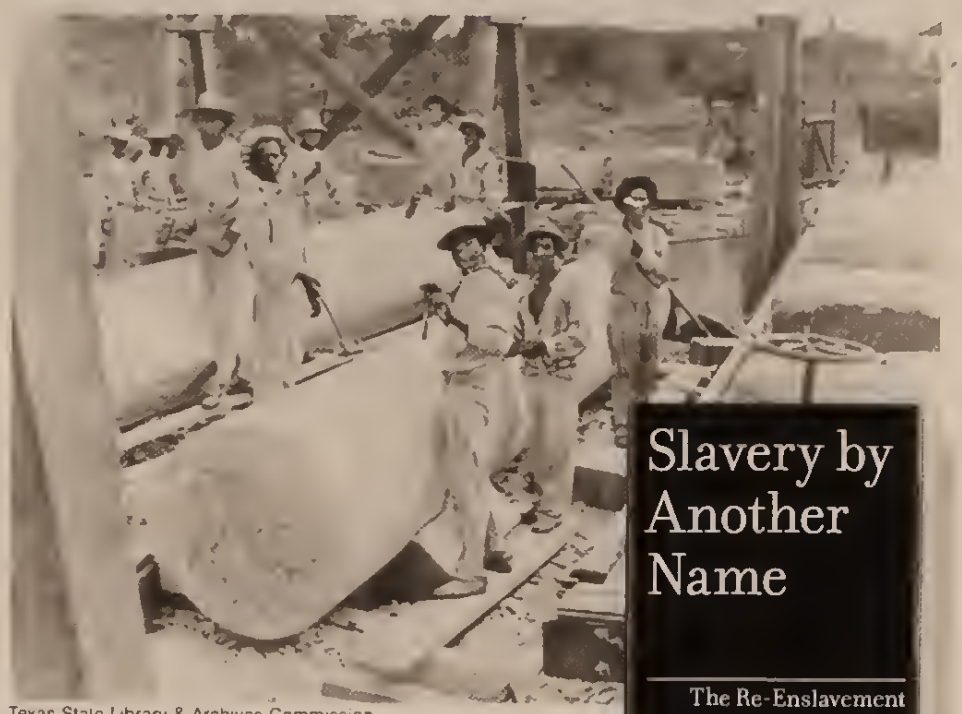
Coal fueled the advance of industry in the South, employing black and white together under hellish conditions. There was a popular saying that down in that inferno all are black, even though the dirtiest jobs were reserved for those who started off the shift with coal-colored skin. Despite deep race-hatred elsewhere, those conditions mandated biracial solidarity in bitter class war.

The Tennessee Coal, Iron, and Railroad Company (TCI) deployed convict labor from 1871 in eastern Tennessee coal fields. Free miners were organized by the Knights of Labor. When their contract expired in April 1891, TCI locked them out and brought in convicts to break the union. There ensued two years of class war. Armed miners up to 3,000-strong marched to stockades holding convict laborers, overwhelmed the guards and released the convicts, sometimes burning the stockades to the ground.

The miners were finally outgunned and outnumbered by a state militia reinforced with army Gatling guns and field artillery. Defeated on the battlefield, the miners nevertheless celebrated something of a victory when the convict lease was not renewed, and TCI was forced to pull up stakes and move its headquarters to Birmingham, where it also operated mines with convict labor. That saga is the subject of Douglas Blackmon's Pulitzer Prize-winning best seller *Slavery by Another Name* (2008). In Birmingham, also, the deployment of convict labor met with fierce resistance by the besieged biracial United Mineworkers, a history unfortunately downplayed by Blackmon.

The post-Reconstruction "Redeemer" governments, based on open black disenfranchisement and Jim Crow terror, made the legal pretense of the horrendous convict lease system unnecessary. In Tennessee, the state simply took over the mines and worked them with prison labor. In 1912 Alabama also took over the TCI mines and worked them with convict labor for another 16 years. Elsewhere in the South, Blackmon writes:

> "As African Americans across the region were ground into political and economic penury, the difference in the costs of legally enslaved and free, but impoverished, labor narrowed dramatically....
> "Moreover, while thousands of state prisoners in Georgia, the Carolinas, and other states were no longer leased to private corporations, they were being forced into an 'improved' method of coercing labor and intimidating African Americans—the chain gang."



Texas State Library & Archives Commission

Pulitzer Prize-winning book by Douglas A. Blackmon chronicles inhuman exploitation of convict labor. Above: Leased prisoners constructing granite columns for the Texas State Capitol in mid 1880s.

In Mississippi and Louisiana, abolition of convict leasing was part of a "reform" package that had as its purpose the complete triumph of white supremacy in political affairs. There, the massive Parchman and Angola prison plantations were made state institutions. Today Angola State Prison is the largest maximum security prison in the country. With long rows of stooped black bodies working under the hot sun, and armed overseers called "trustees" at the end of each row, chattel slavery underwent a 20th-century renaissance.

If I have concentrated on the South it is because its Jim Crow laws and black codes, and not the early 19th-century Quaker vision of the pen as a place of penitence and rehabilitation, shaped the prison boom of the 1980s and 1990s.

American Imperialist Decline

The militant class struggle of the 1930s that built the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) finally integrated black labor into powerful industrial unions, if only at the bottom of the workforce. World War II not only pulled the United States out of the Great Depression but intensified the "Great Migration" of millions of Southern blacks to Northern industrial cities. During the war, it took only 90 days to turn illiterate black rural youth, whose only experience had been chopping weeds in cotton fields, into literate apprentices with high-grade industrial skills. A black proletariat was being forged, strategically integrated into basic American industry, representing the link between the anger of the ghetto and the power of organized labor.

With its imperialist competitors like Japan and Germany devastated, the U.S. emerged from World War II the pre-eminent capitalist power, producing one half of the world's goods. That pre-eminence continued well into the 1950s. With profits fat, at least industrial workers were able to achieve some real gains, but not without hard class struggle. At the same time, as U.S. imperialism's Cold War against the Soviet Union was being launched, and following a massive post-war strike wave, the power of the state to police and shackle labor was magnified. The Taft-Hartley Act outlawed the secondary boycott and banned Communists and other leftists from serving as union officers. In 1955, the AFL and CIO were fused under a homogenized leadership of Cold War fanatics. It was no accident that U.S. union membership began to decline in the mid 1950s, having reached its historic peak in 1954. In 1959, 500,000 steelworkers struck for 116 days; they only returned to work under government intervention and Taft-Hartley injunction. As Leon Trotsky had warned:

> "Monopoly capitalism is less and less willing to reconcile itself to the independence of trade unions. It demands of the reformist bureaucracy and the labor aristocracy, who pick up the crumbs from its banquet table, that they become transformed into its political police before the eyes of the working class."
>
> —"Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay" (1940)

Meanwhile, America's imperialist competitors were rebuilding their plants with the latest technology and much higher productivity. By 1960, U.S. per-hour manufacturing costs were three times those in Europe and ten times those in Japan. Because of increased competition and overproduction, prices were falling worldwide by the early 1970s. But in the U.S. during the same period, the rate of worker compensation increased as strike activity soared. Thus, the rate of profit fell for non-financial corporations from a peak of 10 percent in 1965 to less than 6 percent in the second half of the 1970s, *a fall of more than a third*.

The struggle for black equality in the 1950s broke the back of the Cold War anti-Communist consensus and in the 1960s intersected growing opposition to U.S. imperialism's losing war against the Vietnamese workers and peasants. While the bourgeoisie was willing to permit the gradual abolition of *legal* segregation and a little upward mobility for a small layer of blacks, it unleashed a campaign of "white backlash" and police terror aimed at reining in and suppressing the struggle for black freedom.

Vicious police repression in major U.S. cities precipitated black ghetto eruptions across the country, which were reflected in widespread disaffection among black soldiers in the U.S. military. Meanwhile, working-class upheavals shook America's allies: France in 1968, Italy in 1969 and Portugal in 1974-75. These reverberated across the Atlantic. In the U.S., when 210,000 postal workers walked out in 1970, defying a federal strike ban, President Nixon called out 26,000 National Guard and Army troops to scab. But only 16,000 showed up; to say they were worse than useless would be an understatement. The potential for an explosive and revolutionary transformation of American society was evident. Once again the spectre of black and red haunted the country's rulers.

The response was the bipartisan "war on crime" launched in 1968 by the "Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act," passed under Democratic president Johnson and a Democratic Congress. The Cold War domestic Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO), which originally targeted the Stalinists and Trotskyists, was now expanded to include the New Left, black radicals and other social activists. The militant Black Panther Party in particular was in COINTELPRO's crosshairs. The Panthers represented the best of a generation of black activists who courageously stood up to the racist ruling class and its kill-crazy cops. In 1968, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover vowed, "The Negro youth and moderate[s] must be made to understand that if they succumb to revolutionary teachings, they will be dead revolutionaries." Under the ruthless COINTELPRO vendetta, 38 Panthers were assassinated and hundreds were railroaded to scores of years in prison hellholes—and many are there today, like Mumia Abu-Jamal.

A Lumpen Vanguard?

Unfortunately, the Panthers, along with most of the New Left, rejected the organized working class as the agent of

continued on page 8

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Incarceration...

(continued from page 7)

black freedom and socialist revolution. Inspired by the Caribbean-born black psychiatrist and nationalist Frantz Fanon, the Panthers turned to the most wretched and the most despised layer of black ghetto youth to be the vanguard of the black struggle. The underlying ideology of the Panthers was that of Fanon: that the most oppressed are the most revolutionary. But, in fact, the lumpenproletariat in the ghetto, removed from the means of production, has no real social power. Moreover, as Marx noted in his 1850 work, *The Class Struggles in France*, this layer, which also includes prostitutes and pimps and petty thieves who mostly prey on workers, are "thoroughly malleable, as capable of the most heroic deeds and the most exalted sacrifices as of the basest banditry and the foulest corruption."

Incarcerated black militants served as a transmission belt for social protest into America's penitentiaries, which are but a concentrated expression of racist, capitalist barbarism. What such heroic figures as Malcolm X and George Jackson demonstrate is that some individuals, politicized and radicalized by their own experiences, *transcend their background to choose a social solution to their oppression*. As a black supporter wrote us from Soledad Prison some 33 years ago, "For the bulk of the lumpenproletariat its social and economic stake in capitalist society—its largely parasitic relationship *within* capitalist society—is dependent upon the continuance of such an economic system."

One-Sided Class War

Back on the economic front, the decline of American industry was accelerated by its aging capital stock. New investment went not into retooling and modernization of industry, but into speculative capital or into moving American plants to the low-wage, non-union South and low-wage countries abroad. Organizing the South meant taking Jim Crow racism and the Democratic Party head-on—anathema to the pro-Democratic Party labor tops. International class solidarity with superexploited workers abroad, whose conditions were enforced by brutal U.S.-backed, anti-Communist dictatorships, meant taking on the Cold War establishment, of which the labor bureaucracy was still very much a part.

The labor bureaucrats supported the election of Georgia Democrat Jimmy Carter, who openly proclaimed the virtues of "ethnic purity." In 1979 Carter appointed Paul Volcker as chairman of the Federal Reserve, the same Volcker who is now Obama's point man on economic "reform." After his appointment by Carter, Volcker gave away his game plan for reversing Wall Street's declining rate of profit in a *New York Times* (18 October 1979) interview: "The standard of living of the average American has to decline.... I don't think you can escape that." The Fed chairman proceeded to drastically tighten the money supply, forcing interest rates up to 16.4 percent and driving economic activity down, creating what was then the worst recession since the Great Depression. The Iranians were blamed—some things never change. It was not the ayatollahs in Tehran but the people running Wall Street and the Fed who were responsible.

To let folks know what was coming, Ronald Reagan launched his 1980 presidential campaign from Philadelphia, Mississippi, with a ringing endorsement of "states rights" before a cheering crowd of some 10,000 whites. Philadelphia, which as you may recall was the setting for the film *Mississippi Burning*, is where civil rights workers Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner and James Chaney were murdered 16 years earlier. Obama's admiration for Reagan, after "all the excesses of the 1960s and 1970s," should be seen in this context.

Soon after taking office, Reagan fired over 11,000 striking air traffic controllers, a blow from which the labor movement has not recovered. Volcker stayed on as Fed chief, while unemployment reached 10.8 percent at the end of 1982. In the "miracle of the free market," growing unemployment and the industrial reserve army replace the overseer's whip and the trustee's gun to discipline and drive down the wages of the working class. In addition, the ranks of the industrial reserve army were swelled with the profound deindustrialization that began under Carter and accelerated under Reagan. Between 1980 and 1985 the Department of Labor estimated that some 2.3 million manufacturing jobs disappeared for good. As auto plant after auto plant closed, Detroit lost half its population during the '80s. By 1990, this once-proud center of industrial might and multiracial class struggle was 80 percent black and the poverty rate was 33 percent.

The "War on Drugs"

The economic whip of unemployment was augmented by the vast expansion of police powers and prisons under the bipartisan "war on crime" and "war on drugs." In 1973, New York State governor Nelson Rockefeller launched the harshest drug laws in the country, with mandatory minimum sentences of 15 to life for selling two ounces or possession of four ounces of heroin, morphine, coke or cannabis. As *WV* reported in "New York Tinkers with Rockefeller Laws: Down With the Racist 'War on Drugs'!" (*WV* No. 949, 1 January), these laws, which have recently undergone some paltry reforms, provided a blueprint for similar draconian laws across the country. By the 1980s, the "war on drugs" was a major contributing factor to the historic rise in the prison population. From a figure of about 40,000 people incarcerated in prison or jail for a drug offense in 1980, there has since been a 1,100 percent increase to more than 500,000 prisoners today, with black people accounting for more than 60 percent of drug convictions.

CIO

Integrated packinghouse workers strike in dead of winter in Chicago, late 1930s. Militant class struggle built powerful multiracial industrial unions.

Democrats, and especially black Democrats, have been among the most fervent drug warmongers. The Rainbow/PUSH Coalition's Web site, referring to the "war on drugs" and other government policies, brags that "long before" they "became accepted public policy positions, Reverend Jesse Jackson advocated them." And taking the "war on drugs" global has long been Al Sharpton's mantra. He declared: "We have to use trade leverage to go after the countries that produce the drugs—who openly allow drugs to be in their economy—and put them out of business." Obama, as well as Bush before him, has used the pretense of the global "war on drugs" to build military bases and back death squads in Colombia and wage murderous repression on both sides of the Mexican border (see "Mexico: Down With 'Drug Wars' Militarization!" *WV* No. 953, 26 February). Thanks, Al.

While some reformist outfits bewail the blatant racist profiling by the drug police, most do not raise the elementary democratic demand to decriminalize drugs. Indicative of this is a catchy chant from the Revolutionary Communist Party that only a somewhat demented Maoist could learn to love: "The war on drugs is a war on the people. The fascist crackdown is worse than crack."

A recent article in Progressive Labor's paper, *Challenge* (3 March), actually equated drug treatment centers with police terror and capitalist exploitation, opining: "Having drug clinics in a mainly black and Latino neighborhood is no solution for health care, and is a result of the ruling class' racist attempt to oppress workers." As for the reformism-at-a-snail's-pace International Socialist Organization, now that even Republican California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has called for a debate on legalizing marijuana, they have come out for it as well—but don't hold your breath.

As we wrote in *WV* No. 949, we support any mitigation of the Rockefeller or other drug laws. But no amount of tinkering will change the reactionary nature of these laws or their racist enforcement. We oppose all laws against "crimes without victims"—such as drug use, prostitution, gambling and pornography. Such laws are at bottom designed to maintain social control. By removing the superprofits that come with the illegal, underground nature of the drug trade, decriminalization would also reduce the crime and other social pathology associated with it. We oppose drug testing in the workplace, which employers use to cow the entire workforce and weed out militants.

There is a saying as true as it is old: There is nothing so bad that a cop can't make it worse. Yes, drug addiction can be a terrible thing, but addiction is a medical problem. As anyone can attest who has worked with addicts and understands the physiology and psychology of addiction, nothing creates or aggravates addiction faster than the stress and trauma of police and prison. That is why overcrowded prisons are a breeding ground for drug addiction, just as they are breeding grounds for communicable diseases.

By targeting prostitutes and drug addicts, the state also targets those who are at high risk for HIV, and one in every four Americans living with HIV passes through a prison. As of 2005, blacks and Latinos represented 71 percent of all new AIDS cases and the majority of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Immigrants and Incarceration

It took a Civil War to smash slavery and create the Fourteenth Amendment, which granted citizenship not only to blacks but also to the children of immigrants born on American soil. While the American ruling class has always used racial and ethnic divisions to keep working people and the oppressed divided, the truth is that immigrant rights and black freedom either go forward hand in hand, or they fall back separately.

Today, some 400,000 immigrants pass through wretched detention facilities, some dying though sheer lack of medical attention and then "disappearing." No wonder the Obama administration, like Bush's, even refuses to make legally enforceable rules for immigration detention. We demand full citizenship rights for all immigrants, no matter how they made it here.

At the same time, an estimated 5.3 million Americans are denied the right to vote because of laws that prohibit voting by people with felony convictions, including 1.4 million black men. In Florida, over 30 percent of black men can't vote. We categorically oppose every instance of black disenfranchisement. Full voting rights for prisoners and convicted felons!

In 2007, before the current economic crisis, the National Institute of Justice found that 60 percent of all felons remain unemployed a year after their release. We say: abolish every one of California's 210 laws and regulations that prevent felons from getting jobs or licenses—even to be a barber, an interior designer or a guide dog trainer. Strike down criminal background checks for employment applications! Full access for ex-cons to all public services, like public housing!

At the same time, we oppose so-called "Second Chance" or "Ex-Offender" programs, which are meant to replace union jobs and exploit ex-cons as cheap labor

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Detroit: General Motors world headquarters looms above makeshift homeless shelter, March 2009 (left). Hard-hit residents line up to receive food supplies, December 2008.

AFP

Women detainees at immigrant detention center in Texas, 2007. Homeland Security officials forced them to turn their backs to visiting media.

with no benefits or protection. One such program was recently instituted in Chicago transit (see "Down With Racist, Anti-Union 'Ex-Offender Apprentice' Scheme!" *WV* No. 923, 24 October 2008). We say: Equal pay for equal work! Organize ex-cons like anyone else into the unions with full union wages, benefits and protection!

Impulse to Genocide

As the first to be fired and the last to be hired, black people were always overrepresented in America's industrial reserve army. But now the ravages of decaying American capitalism are driving many black workers out of the productive economy and into the ranks of the lumpenproletariat as an outlaw caste.

In the 1990s, Washington and California led the states in passing "Three Strikes Laws," which established mandatory sentences for a third felony conviction. The '90s also saw the resurrection of post-Civil War "black codes" in the form of so-called "quality of life," "zero tolerance" and "anti-gang" laws and policies. These laws criminalized black and Latino youth, often for minor acts of misbehavior, and the poor and the homeless for their poverty. Following the so-called "'90s boom" of the Democratic Clinton administration, by 2000 one out of every three black men in their 20s was in prison or unemployed. As we wrote in the article "Lockdown U.S.A." (*WV* No. 618, 10 March 1995): "The bourgeoisie's vicious drive to imprison and execute the ever-increasing numbers of ghetto youth reflects a sinister impulse to genocide against a layer of the black population."

Black Panther Party supporter, former Communist Party member and UC Santa Cruz professor Angela Davis has written:

> "Taking into account the structural similarities and profitability of business-government linkages in the realms of military production and public punishment, the expanding penal system can now be characterized as a 'prison industrial complex'."
>
> —"Masked Racism: Reflections on the Prison Industrial Complex," *ColorLines* (Fall 1998)

Following the Civil War, as we have seen, racist incarceration was used to force freedmen back onto the plantations or into the mines as convict laborers. But to treat today's prisons as profit centers—when in fact the main activity is enforced inactivity punctuated by grotesque violence—disguises their core role as institutions of organized class repression and prettifies the irrational, rotting capitalist system they represent and defend. SCI-Greene, the Pennsylvania Supermax where Mumia Abu-Jamal is locked down 23 hours a day on death row, is not a profit center, although it is just as indispensable to the defense of the predatory profit system as the 82nd Airborne.

Black lumpenization is not some racist conspiracy between the White House and Wall Street, but part of the normal workings of the capitalist marketplace. As described by Marx in his renowned work, *Capital* (1867):

> "The greater the social wealth...and, therefore, also the absolute mass of the proletariat and the productiveness of its labour, the greater is the industrial reserve army.... But the greater this reserve army in proportion to the active labour army, the greater is the mass of a consolidated surplus population, whose misery is in inverse ratio to its torment of labour. The more extensive, finally, the lazarus-layers of the working class, and the industrial reserve army, the greater is official pauperism. ***This is the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation.***" [emphasis in original]

Since 2000, the U.S. has lost another five million manufacturing jobs. The existence of a strong, skilled black proletariat is the product of an exceptional conjuncture in American history, and we must do our best to defend and extend it against all the ravages of American capitalism and the treachery of the pro-imperialist union bureaucracy. For black workers remain indispensable to a revolutionary rejuvenation of American labor—and does it need rejuvenating!

Education and Revolution

A call for the March 4 "Day of Action to Defend Education" asks: "But if there's money for wars, bank bailouts, and prisons, why is there no money for public education?" In his autobiography, the former slave Frederick Douglass quoted his former master that to educate a man "would forever unfit him to be a slave." That is why it was a crime punishable by hanging to teach slaves to read or write. Visit inner-city schools today and you wonder if those codes are still in effect. Right now putrescent American capitalism has no need to educate working-class or poor youth; it has no room for those skilled black apprentices that filled the shipyards during World War II. Many of the black and Latino youth for whom the bourgeoisie cannot provide a future end up in prison.

Our Spartacus Youth Clubs demand free, quality public education for all, from preschool to postgrad, and a living stipend so working people and the poor—and felons—can afford college. We demand a massive expansion of remedial and bilingual education for inner-city schools and neighborhoods. But equal and adequate education is rendered meaningless if the majority of blacks and other socially downtrodden people are excluded from using the results by a decaying social order that has consigned three generations of black youth to the scrap heap.

Labor has created the social wealth that has made human culture, science and technology possible. That is why we insist that the struggle for equal education is part of the perspective for the overthrow of disintegrating capitalism, which threatens the whole culture of mankind, and its replacement with a centrally planned socialist economy on a global scale. Only that will make accessible the fruits of human culture to be fully utilized for the benefit of humanity at large.

If that seems utopian, look at the Cuban deformed workers state for only a foretaste of what is possible. We stand for the unconditional military defense of Cuba because there the capitalists were thrown out of power—although a proletarian political revolution remains on the agenda to get rid of the Stalinist bureaucrats running the country. From this former sugar colony, 400 doctors, whose entire education and training was paid for by the state, are now in Haiti providing top quality medical services to earthquake victims.

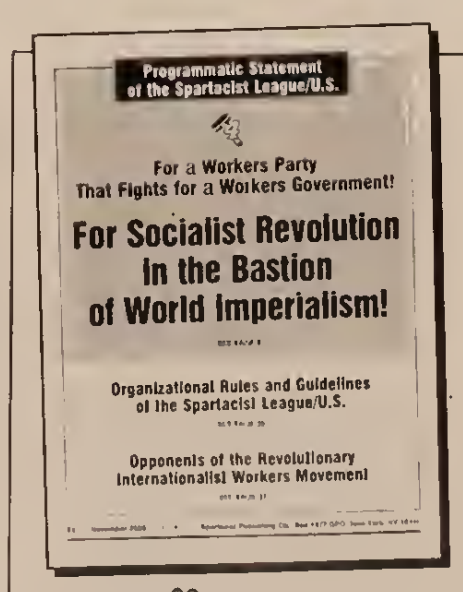
Marxism rejects the religious dogma of punishment, whether it is retributive or penitential. What is utopian is thinking you can reform the capitalist Leviathan and abolish its dungeons without overthrowing the whole damn capitalist-imperialist system. Only then can we consign the modern instruments of torture, incarceration and death to the museum, alongside the rack, the pillory and the whipping post.

For a Revolutionary Workers Party

Shortly after the end of the American Civil War, Marx wrote in *Capital* (1867): "Labour cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded." You will find those words on the membership cards of our Labor Black League for Social Defense.

You are not going to get labor and black freedom by backing the Democratic Party of racism and imperialist war. Yes, they claim to feel your pain, and the reformists push Democratic Party lesser-evilism. When the Democrats get into office they can do greater evil with lesser resistance. And you're not going to get any satisfaction with those green-washers of capital and pacifiers of the people, the Greens or the Peace and Freedom Party either.

Don't buy the substitute, the imitation or the fake. Let's get on with the immensely difficult and challenging task in this post-Soviet trough of building the kind of party needed for the inevitable social and class battles ahead, one that is proletarian, internationalist and revolutionary. Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Finish the Civil War! Break with the Democrats! Build a workers party that fights for a socialist future!■



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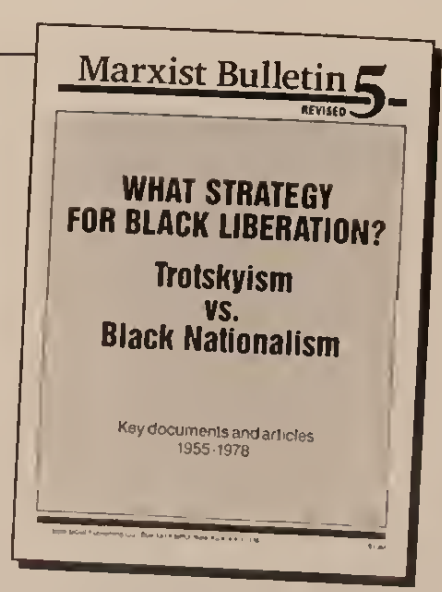

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Haiti...

(continued from page 12)

can only be a dagger aimed at the social and national aspirations of the Haitian toiling people. ***All U.S./UN troops and police out now!***

In a 1941 article titled "Shall We Campaign for U.S. Government Aid to the USSR?" (*Militant*, 19 July 1941), the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) underlined: "There is a difference between not raising any objection, when a capitalist government sends aid, and *agitating* for such aid. The key to the whole question consists in the understanding that we cannot rely on bourgeois governments to aid our cause." The SWP was addressing the demand of the Stalinist Communist Party that the U.S. provide aid to the Soviet Union following the June 1941 Nazi invasion amid the Second World War. The Trotskyists opposed all the belligerent imperialist powers in that interimperialist slaughter, while standing for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state.

But while the circumstances were different than those in Haiti today, the Marxist method outlined by our Trotskyist forebears remains fully valid. To call on the imperialists to provide aid means taking "responsibility for bourgeois governmental policy." Drawing out the logic of the Stalinists' position, the SWP article added: "Were we to agitate for aid to the Soviet Union by the Roosevelt government, would we then not be compelled to favor convoys to guarantee the arrival of the material shipped to the Soviet Union? Should we then not demand that the waters to Vladivostok be kept open by the U.S. government against Japan?" Indeed, the Stalinists' call for imperialist aid was part and parcel of their support to the "democratic" imperialists in World War II.

In Haiti today, the U.S. imperialists have basically achieved their purpose, including a blunt reassertion to the rest of the world, most notably French imperialism, that the Caribbean remains an "American lake." They are patting themselves on the back for a job well done as they wind down their military deployment in Haiti to 8,000 soldiers in order to direct troops back to where the Pentagon needs them—as part of the armies of occupation in Iraq and Afghanistan. At the same time, some 9,000 UN troops and 3,600 UN cops are to occupy Haiti. The U.S. and other imperialist military forces in the Caribbean are a particular threat to the Cuban bureaucratically deformed workers state. ***Defend Cuba! U.S. out of Guantánamo! All U.S. troops and bases out of Puerto Rico!***

Meanwhile, the Obama administration's vaunted offer of temporary legal status for undocumented Haitian immigrants in the U.S. has been shown to be the sham that it is, as only a small percentage of these immigrants has been able to afford the $500 application fees for the legal permits. Anybody who has made it to the U.S. should have the right to stay and work here. ***Down with the racist ban on Haitian refugees! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!***

The notion purveyed by reformists like the ISO and WWP that U.S. imperialism can be cajoled or pressured into serving the needs of the oppressed, rather than its own class interests, shows boundless illusions in the good offices of the rapacious American ruling class. Such illusion-mongering goes hand in hand with fawning over Third World populist nationalists like Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Préval's mentor, who was restored to the presidential palace in Port-au-Prince in 1994 by a U.S. invasion force after being ousted by a (U.S.-backed) military coup. Aristide was then subsequently whisked away by the U.S. in 2004.

Taking up the left flank of the reformists is the centrist Internationalist Group (IG). In a 20 January article, the IG grotesquely and cynically claimed that the earthquake provided an opening for socialist revolution in Haiti, "particularly at present where the machinery of the capitalist state is largely reduced to rubble and a few marauding bands of police." As we wrote in response in *WV* No. 951, "not only is the state 'largely reduced to rubble,' but so is the society as a whole," underlining that "there is a military power in Haiti that is far from 'reduced to rubble,' and it's U.S. imperialism." Indeed, the only force that seemed to share the IG's delusions of an uprising in Haiti after the quake was the Pentagon.

Yet the IG denounced us as "supporting imperialism" because we didn't call for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops. As we stated, in a situation where there were no good alternatives, we were "not going to call for an end to such aid as the desperate Haitian masses can get their hands on." That the IG conjured up fantasies of a workers uprising was little more than an effort to give a phony "revolutionary" veneer to Haitian populists and others who used the earthquake to reinforce the illusions of the Haitian masses in Aristide (see "Haiti: IG Conjures Up Revolution Amid the Rubble," *WV* No. 952, 12 February).

The desperate conditions of Haiti cannot be resolved within Haiti. To end the grinding poverty and degradation of the Haitian people, the imperialist system must be swept away through international socialist revolution. What there is of a working class in Haiti has neither the social weight nor industrial concentration to effect a revolutionary transformation of that society. But in the Dominican Republic, Canada and the U.S. there are hundreds of thousands of Haitian workers who can play a vital role in the struggle for socialist revolution. As we stressed in *WV* No. 951: "The key to the liberation of Haiti lies in proletarian revolution throughout the hemisphere, in which the mobilization of the sizable Haitian proletariat ***in the diaspora*** can play a key role.... It is only this revolutionary internationalist program that holds out any genuine perspective for the liberation of the Haitian masses."■

New Orleans...

(continued from page 3)

CNN (inset), Brandon/Times-Picayune

4 September 2005: Louisiana state police and New Orleans cops arrest Lance Madison at Danziger Bridge, as he and others tried to cross the bridge after Hurricane Katrina. That day, the cops killed two people on the bridge, one of them Lance's brother, Ronald Madison (inset), a mentally disabled man.

have the security until you have the jail." One ended up in Camp Greyhound by simply being "foreign" (Zeitoun was originally from Syria), black or in the wrong place at the wrong time. In *Zeitoun*, Eggers writes:

> "One man said he was a sanitation worker from Houston. His company had been contracted shortly after the storm to come in and begin the cleanup. One morning he was walking from the hotel to his truck when a National Guard truck pulled up. He was arrested on the spot, and brought to Camp Greyhound.... He usually picked up garbage in Houston, but after the hurricane, his supervisor said they had taken a contract in New Orleans. This prisoner, thinking it would be interesting to see what had become of the city and wanting to help in its cleanup, went willingly. He was in uniform, and had identification, the keys to his truck, everything. But nothing worked. He was charged with looting and put in the cages behind the bus station."

Corruption, Killing and the NOPD

Corruption is almost synonymous with the word Louisiana. It goes back for many decades, possibly to the post-Reconstruction period. The story goes that the night before he was inaugurated as governor, segregationist Jimmie Davis (country singer and author of the song, "You Are My Sunshine") was asked by a reporter: "What is going to be the first thing that you do as governor?" Davis's reply was, "Steal!" Davis was responsible for building the "Sunshine Bridge," which went across the Mississippi from nowhere to nowhere—when first constructed, the south end of the bridge emptied into a swamp.

Corruption is also synonymous with the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD)—as is daily murderous repression of the black population. Now under federal investigation is the infamous Danziger Bridge incident in which the NOPD killed two black people, one a mentally retarded man who was shot in the back. There is the burned-out car containing the body of Henry Glover, found behind a police station. This was not investigated until the *Nation* broke the story online in December 2008—and there are many, many more post-Katrina atrocities still coming to light.

For a sample of the death squads run by the NOPD in the pre-Katrina period you can read *Workers Vanguard* articles going back decades. "New Orleans Cop Death Squad" (*WV* No. 322, 28 January 1983) recounted the story of the 1980 execution-style slaying of four black people in the ghetto of Algiers, the subject of an exposé on *60 Minutes*. A decade later, another article with the same headline (*WV* No. 615, 27 January 1995) detailed the execution of Kim Marie Groves, who had filed a brutality complaint against NOPD cops, an execution NOPD cop Len Davis was charged with ordering.

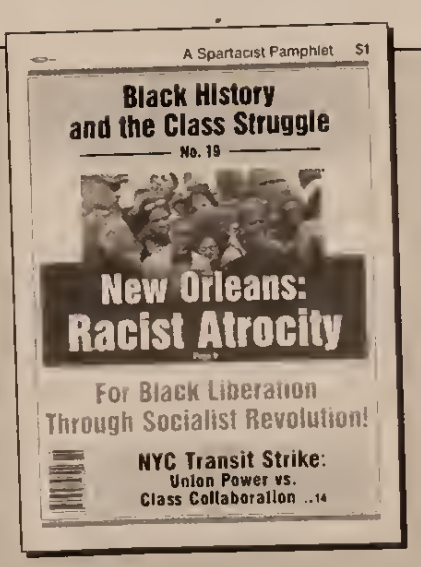
But this is not simply about the local cops, who are plenty brutal, murderous and corrupt. Their mission is to repress blacks and labor. A few years ago as sanitation workers were shutting down Mardi Gras, they were attacked by the cops. Though the cops' class hatred is up-front, their corruption can sometimes get in the way. More recently, the cops attacked unionized transit workers of the Amalgamated Transit Union. This was an embarrassment, as the *New York Times* (9 October 2009) reported: "Contentious episodes have kept the department in litigation, including a 2008 racially charged bar brawl involving off-duty police officers and transit workers; the integrity bureau reported that officers tried to cover up the facts of the brawl, and some officers were fired."

The NOPD is so corrupt and therefore so little trusted by the bourgeoisie that Blackwater and other private mercenary groups resembling the Freikorps murderers of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were brought in to patrol New Orleans streets. Their self-described mission was "securing neighborhoods" and "confronting criminals." These mercenaries were brought in by Homeland Security and deputized by then-governor Kathleen Blanco. Or they were hired by the wealthy Bourbons. F. Patrick Quinn III hired them to guard his $3 million private estate and his luxury hotels—hotels that were considered for contracts for housing FEMA workers (see "Blackwater Down," *Nation*, 10 October 2005). One reporter actually saw drones flying overhead. Blackwater frequently operates and loads armed drones in Afghanistan for the U.S. government. Meanwhile, some local cops were out "liberating" Cadillacs from a local dealership.

The idea of private military security fits right in with the free market concept, though even some "free marketeers" like the cultish Ayn Rand hesitate. As a *New Yorker* (9 November 2009) article on Rand noted: "Allowance is made for the state to run an army, a police force, and courts, but that's it." That *is* the core of the state, whether its functions are partially "outsourced" or not. As we wrote in "'War on Terror': Torture, Spying, Imperialist Butchery" (*WV* No. 890, 13 April 2007):

> "The veneer of 'democracy' is meant to cover the reality of the capitalist state—with its cops, courts, prisons and army—as an apparatus of violence designed to protect capitalist profits and rule against the exploited and the oppressed. This murderous apparatus has been greatly bolstered by the 'war on terror.' But as sinister as the new measures are, what the government is actually able to get away with will ultimately be determined by the level of social struggle."

It will take a proletarian socialist revolution to end the savage exploitation and brutal racial oppression of capitalist class rule and the barbarism through which it is enforced. Our purpose is to build the workers party necessary to lead the proletariat in that struggle.■



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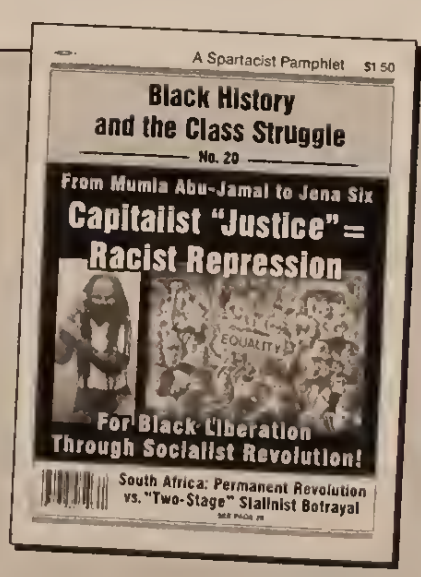

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For Free, Quality, Integrated Education for All!

We print below, slightly edited for publication, the speech given by a Spartacus Youth Club spokesman at the March 4 Day of Action to Defend Public Education protest at the University of California, Los Angeles.

As communists, we in the Spartacus Youth Club understand that the fight against racist reaction on campus must be linked to the fight for free, quality, integrated education for all. For open admissions! No tuition! Racial oppression and all forms of oppression are endemic to the capitalist system. Only through the struggle to get rid of this system and replace it with a socialist, egalitarian social order can the material roots of oppression be eliminated. The racist lynch rope provocations sprouting across the UCs are a result of the racist purge of the universities. They demonstrate that Obama's so-called "end of racism" is a cruel lie. We say: *Finish the Civil Wor! For block liberotion through socialist revolution!*

The main obstacle to this struggle is the illusion promoted by liberals, black politicians, trade-union misleaders and reformist socialists like the Revolutionary Communist Party that the capitalist system can he reformed to serve the interests of working people and the oppressed. Ohama is the Commander-in-Chief of U.S. imperialism, director of mass murder in Afghanistan and Iraq, and yet Progressive Lahor Party worked in his campaign. We say: ***Breok with the Democrats! For o revolutionary workers party thot fights for sociolist revolution!***

What is needed here are not appeals to the campus administration, but militant joint student-worker protest to beat back the racists and the bigots. The UC Regents are the capitalist watchdogs over the university, yet liberal groups like Student Worker Front and BAMN promote them as allies. We say: ***Abolish the Board of Regents! For student/ worker control of the universities!*** We oppose demands on the campus administration and the capitalist state to police "hate crimes" because these foster illusions in the racist cops and courts and holster their repressive power. Such measures have historically been used against leftists, black militants and student radicals.

In the depths of the "Great Recession" students need to realize that only the multiracial working class, including immigrants and blacks, has the social power and the interest to fight this capitalist system. The Spartacus Youth Club seeks to win students to the working-class struggle against capital, based on the full program of revolutionary Marxism.

Young Spartacus

Spartacus Youth Club demands "Break with the Democrats!" at March 4 demonstration at the University of California, Los Angeles.

the 2003 Supreme Court decision against the University of Michigan's affirmative action program:

> "The stark truth is that there is no way to overcome entrenched racial oppression within the framework of capitalism, in the universities or elsewhere. Affirmative action programs were set up as a sop to *defuse* social struggle and in order to create and co-opt a 'talented tenth' of black middle-class professionals. But these paltry, tokenistic efforts never made a dent in the deep-seated oppression of the black ghetto masses, whose condition has continued to deteriorate over the past few decades."
>
> —"Free, Quality, Integrated Education for All!" *WV* No. 801, 11 April 2003

When it comes to the education of those they exploit, the capitalist rulers expend only what they need to maintain a minimally educated workforce. In the short term, the capitalists may give sops to head off social struggle, but under capitalism these reforms can be and usually are reversed. And if educating the sons and daughters of white workers has increasingly become an expendable overhead, the children of impoverished black people are increasingly deemed an expendable population by America's rulers. Today the bourgeoisie questions "wasting money" to keep the black ghetto poor alive, much less educate them.

Full political, social and economic equality for the black masses requires a workers revolution to rip the economy out of the hands of the racist capitalist rulers and reorganize society on a socialist basis, where production is for human need, not profit. Only through the full integration of black people into an egalitarian socialist society will it be possible to eliminate the material roots of black oppression. The Spartacus Youth Club fights for workers rule, where everyone's labor and talents will be needed to build a socialist world of abundance and equality, and where education for all will be a natural part of this collective labor. Join us in this fight!■

San Diego...

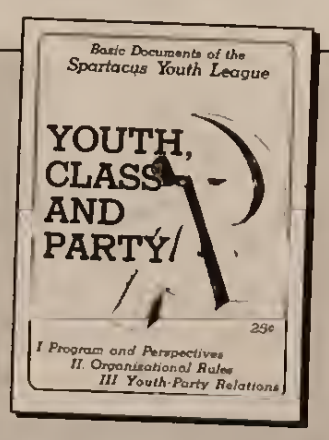
(continued from page 12)

to protest cuts, layoffs, fee hikes and the shrinking numbers of blacks and minority students on the campuses (see "Protests against Education Cuts and Fee Hikes Sweep California," *WV* No. 950, 15 January). In California, the March 4 demonstrations brought out tens of thousands of university and high school students, as well as multiracial trade-union contingents of teachers and campus and public workers. But the demonstrations were organized on the basis of begging the bourgeois rulers to reorganize their priorities to benefit the oppressed. This comes down to pitting the workers and the oppressed against each other for crumbs from the capitalists—as shown when Schwarzenegger came out against any further cuts in funding for education, but instead chopped nearly half a billion dollars more in services for the poor, disabled and elderly in line-item vetoes!

Grotesquely playing into the capitalists' divide-and-rule scheme, the chair of UCLA's Afrikan Student Union demanded the firing of the UCSD library staff after the noose was found. Seeking to work together with the same administration overseeing the gutting of education and the purging of black and minority students, the UCSD BSU co-issued a "joint statement" with the campus administration for the March 4 Day of Action proclaiming, "The UC San Diego administration and students have engaged in a productive wide-ranging conversation about how our common goals can be reached...there is a commitment from all participants to work together." The joint statement's recommendations centered on funding BSU-supported programs "to promote diversity on campus." In the context of the destruction of many of the gains of the civil rights movement, many liberal activists today have abandoned even talk of black equality in favor of the tokenistic rhetoric of "diversity."

In an open letter posted on their Web site, By Any Means Necessary (BAMN) extended an invitation to the UCSD BSU to join them begging on their knees to the Board of Regents to "follow California Attorney General Jerry Brown's lead by stating as their position in the federal court that Proposition 209 is unconstitutional and discriminatory." (Brown, a Democrat, is now running for governor.) Far from offering a perspective of struggle independent of the capitalists, BAMN and other liberals seek to channel the youthful fighters for black rights who are turning out for these protests into the dead end of reliance on the Democratic Party, the Supreme Court, the campus administration and other institutions of racist capitalist rule.

We defend affirmative action in university admissions because it has meant gains, however minimal, against the inherent race and class bias in higher education under capitalism. But, as we asserted against BAMN in an article written before



Originally published in 1971 as the basic programmatic document of the youth group of the Spartacist League/U.S. This edition includes a 1974 introduction.

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Little Rock, Arkansas, 1957: Elizabeth Eckford braves racist mob to attend Central High School. Decades after the civil rights movement, public education is increasingly segregated.

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BAY AREA

Thursday, April 8, 6:30 p.m.
Proletarian State Power Versus Bourgeois Democracy
San Francisco State University
Cesar Chavez Student Center
Rosa Parks E
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
sycbayarea@sbcglobal.net

NEW YORK CITY

Wednesday, April 14, 7:30 p.m.
Imperialism and War: The Epoch of Capitalist Decay
Hunter College
West Building, Room 509C
(No. 6 train to 68th St.-Hunter College)
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
nysl@tiac.net

CHICAGO

Wednesday, March 31, 5:30 p.m.
The Fight for a Multiracial Revolutionary Workers Party: Finish the Civil War! For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!
University of Illinois at Chicago
Student Center East
Prairie Room
750 S. Halsted Street
(Exit Halsted Street at UIC-Halsted stop on CTA Blue Line)
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
chicagosyc@sbcglobal.net

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WORKERS VANGUARD

All U.S./UN Troops Out of Haiti Now!

It is now more than two months since Haiti was struck by the earthquake that left over 200,000 of its nine million people dead. The quake has multiplied the desperate conditions of what was already the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Even before the devastation wreaked by it, nearly one out of every two Haitians had no regular access to drinking water and more than half the population survived on less than one dollar a day. Two centuries of looting by the U.S. and France and repeated American invasions to install and prop up brutal tinpot dictatorships had left the populace utterly exposed to the ravages of this natural disaster and totally reliant on outside aid. The quisling state administration of President René Préval—a fig leaf for a United Nations occupation regime—installed in 2006 at U.S. imperialism's behest, collapsed as rapidly as did the tin shacks housing much of the population.

As part of a "relief effort," the Obama administration dispatched some 20,000 troops and a flotilla of naval vessels to Haiti, not least in order to prevent Haitians from fleeing to the U.S. and to shore up the UN occupation force, which itself was damaged by the quake. Some 2,000 additional UN troops have been sent to the country, as well as an additional 1,500 UN police.

In response to the quake, a range of pseudo-socialist groups in the U.S. rushed to beg the American imperialists to do right by the Haitian people and send "aid not troops." In this, groups like the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and Workers World Party (WWP) served only to aid Democrat Obama, whose election they had hailed, in providing a "humanitarian" facelift for blood-drenched U.S. imperialism. The notion that the imperialist powers that have laid waste to this small black country will serve the interests of the Haitian masses is a sick joke.

As we made clear in our article, "Haiti Earthquake Horror: Imperialism, Racism and Starvation" (*WV* No. 951, 29 January), while we were not for the U.S. military going into Haiti, neither were we going to demand, in the immediate aftermath of that horrific natural disaster, the immediate withdrawal of any forces that were supplying such aid as was reaching the Haitian masses. But the continued presence of any U.S. or UN military forces

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AP

Port-au-Prince: U.S. troops land on lawn of presidential palace, January 19.

Lynch Rope Provocation at UC San Diego

Young Spartacus

In the last two months, black students at the University of California San Diego (UCSD) have been subjected to a barrage of racist provocations. In February, the UCSD PIKE fraternity sponsored a "Compton Cookout" mocking Black History Month and promising guests a taste of "life in the ghetto." Partygoers were urged to dress as ghetto stereotypes and promised there would be chicken, watermelon and malt liquor. Then angry black students were grotesquely denounced on UCSD Student Run Television as "ungrateful n----rs." When Black Student Union (BSU) members made a search of the studio for the tape, now missing, they found instead a cardboard sign reading "Compton Lynching." This outrage was followed by the hanging of a lynch rope, the symbol of Ku Klux Klan murderous race terror, from a campus library light fixture.

An Afghan student who saw the hanging noose correctly concluded, "I just took that noose as an attack on all of us." Other UC students spoke of immigrant-bashing "border parties" that require attendees to hop a fence to gain admittance. That this was defended as just good fun reflects the pervasiveness of racist reaction. Meanwhile, the head of the UCSD College Republicans, who absurdly denounced UCSD as an "extreme leftist" school, announced that "subsequent protests could deepen racial separation." This is the old Jim Crow logic, where it's not the racists but those who protest against racist treatment who are portrayed as threatening the racial "harmony" of a society founded on the bedrock of black oppression. Historically, every struggle for black equality has raised the spectre of communism.

In that vein, Governor Schwarzenegger, an admirer of the racist border vigilante Minutemen, went out of his way to condemn eleven students who were arrested protesting in defense of the besieged Palestinians at an appearance of the Israeli ambassador at UC Irvine in early February. The "Governator" obscenely equated them with UC San Diego racists and swastika-carving vandals of UC Davis. We say: Hands off the Irvine 11! Defend the Palestinians!

The campus racists have been emboldened by the attacks of the capitalist rulers, both Democrats and Republicans, on the measures even minimally addressing discrimination against black youth. The elimination of affirmative action programs across the country, together with skyrocketing tuition and fee costs, has meant a racist purge of black students from the universities. In 1996, California Proposition 209 banned affirmative action programs and slashed financial aid and remedial and counseling programs, with the result that today black students represent only *3.8 percent* of the student body in the University of California system! In the context of the current economic crisis, funding for public education has been cut to the bone in California, with programs closed, fees hiked and teachers laid off. Freshman class size at the California State Universities and community colleges, where there was proportionally higher black and minority enrollment, has been slashed, restricting access to education even further for working people and the poor.

The racist provocations sparked protests and occupations at UC San Diego and other UC campuses in the weeks leading up to the March 4 "Strike and Day of Action to Defend Public Education" called

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Erik Jepsen/UCSD Guardian

Black Student Union-organized protest against racist outrages at University of California, San Diego, February 24.

Down With the Racist Purge of the Universities!

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 956 C-701 9 April 2010

"Reform" Wall Street Can Believe In

Democrats' Health Care Scam

Getty

For Free, Quality Health Care, Including for All Immigrants! For Free Abortion on Demand!

Uninsured and homeless patients wait for care at a Coalition for the Homeless clinic in Denver, Colorado, July 2009.

One would think that it would be impossible to pass a health reform that did not offer something to someone. But the Democrats have managed to come close. To be sure, 30 million people now without health care are eventually supposed to be covered. But 23 million people are projected to remain uninsured by 2019. Children seem likely to be covered for pre-existing conditions at a cost to be negotiated with the insurance company vampires, a benefit to be extended in 2014 to all others. Older Americans can expect to pay even more usurious fees for such coverage.

While Barack Obama and the Democrats pat themselves on the back for passing this "historic" legislation, undocumented immigrants are proscribed from receiving benefits from this "reform." In most states, even those with legal papers will have to be residents for five years to be eligible for such assistance as Medicaid. And women in need of an abortion, which is becoming next to impossible to get access to, need not apply. Obama went out of his way to sign an executive order reaffirming the Hyde Amendment, which bans federal funding for abortions. His bill allocates some $250 million for "abstinence only education."

There is supposed to be some more money for community health clinics, which are themselves minuscule in scope. But if your employer doesn't insure you or you're not on Medicare, you'll have to buy coverage from the very insurance giants that have made U.S. health costs the highest on the planet, while most U.S. citizens, in comparison to those in other industrial nations, receive the poorest health care. The insurance companies are the same parasites that regularly deny people coverage on the basis of "pre-existing conditions." In Texas last month, a baby born with a rare heart defect was denied coverage by Blue Cross because he was considered to have a "pre-existing condition" (sensing a PR disaster, the insurance company eventually covered the child, though at a higher premium).

There are no guarantees of affordable premiums or decent coverage. But if you don't buy insurance, you could be penalized up to $695 per adult (or $2,085 per family), or 2.5 percent of your household income, whichever is higher. And you can be sure that the insurance companies will do everything to get around the pre-existing conditions clause.

As we warned in "For Socialized Medicine!" (*WV* No. 943, 25 September 2009), "Obama invokes the plight of the uninsured, with promises of a level of care not much above a pledge to pick up the dead bodies, in order to massively ***cut health care costs***." The spectre of this country's impoverished and uninsured masses is being wielded as a battering ram against unionized workers and the elderly. Some $500 ***billion*** are to be slashed from Medicare. And beginning in 2018, the costs for this "reform" will in part be paid by taxing the "Cadillac" health plans held by not a few organized workers.

In a recent issue of *CounterPunch* (29 March), columnist Kevin Zeese gives the following grim prognosis:

> "The new law forces Americans to buy a corporate product that is overpriced and flawed. Americans could be required to pay up to 9.5 percent of their income on insurance that only covers an average of 70 percent of their medical expenses. In addition, insurance is allowed to deny care with no court review of that decision. As a result, someone with insurance, paying an expensive premium, could find themselves in bankruptcy as a result of this law. The major cause of bankruptcy before this bill was a health care crisis and a majority of those people had insurance. That will remain true under the new law."

Those bankruptcies are hardly an accident. For decades, employers, in the process of slashing their payroll costs, have been raising the out-of pocket expenses for the health coverage they provide. In this period of historically low strike activity, the few strikes that have erupted have largely been over health care. This is exactly the kind of reform bill that Wall Street wanted, with "progressive" tycoons like Warren Buffet even willing to pay a little extra in taxes for the cause of containing soaring health expenses in the U.S.

Liberal Democrats regret the absence of what was always meant to be a dwarfed "public option," and the trade-union tops are not pleased with the tax on "Cadillac" plans —but "hey," as they now say, "it's a start." But in fact, the new law is a creature that the labor bureaucrats helped to create. Notably, SEIU service workers union leader Dennis Rivera served as Obama's point man for the reform, gaining kudos for helping to forge a coalition of insurance and drug companies, along with the American Medical Association and the American Hospital Association and their lobbyists, that determined the bill's real contours. These corporate foxes now not only control the chicken coop, but also, with access to abortion being even further constrained, the government has taken on the role of a priest in ensuring that the hens pay the price for their sexual "sins."

In the aftermath of the bill's passage, many liberals and leftists are today expressing dismay at the paucity of its benefits. These are, virtually to a man, the same gaggle who promoted Obama's election as the road to progress after years of Republican reaction and who

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The Cold War and the Civil Rights Movement

See Page 6

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TROTSKY

LENIN

Pioneer Trotskyist and Fighter for Women's Rights

Honor Antoinette Konikow

We reprint below a 1938 speech given by Antoinette Konikow, originally published in *Socialist Appeal* (5 November 1938), at a meeting celebrating her 50 years as a revolutionary Marxist. Konikow was born in 1869 in tsarist Russia and at the age of 19 joined Plekhanov's Emancipation of Labor Group. As a result of tsarist repression, she emigrated to the United States in 1893. In her 50 years as a communist fighter, Antoinette Konikow not only stayed the course but also, with Marxist compass in hand, fought for the correct program in the major fights of the socialist movement.

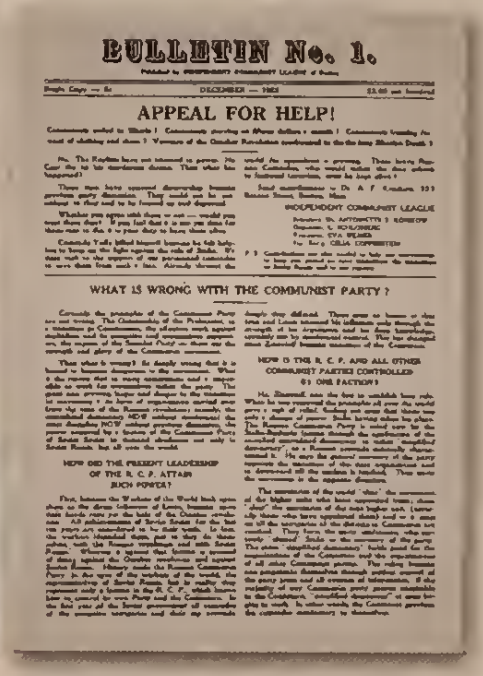
Konikow joined the Socialist Labor Party in 1893; she was expelled in 1897 for her opposition to its bureaucratic practices. Already speaking five languages, she learned Yiddish in the mid 1890s in order to become a more effective organizer among immigrant Jewish workers. In 1901, Konikow was a founding member of the Socialist Party of America. In opposition to World War I, she toured the U.S., inspired by German Marxist leader Karl Liebknecht's courageous opposition to social patriotism. She threw her support to the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and became a founder of the Communist movement in the U.S. in 1919 (she was associated with Ludwig Lore, a founding member of the Communist Labor Party). Against the Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet Union, which began in 1923-24, she took up the fight alongside Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky and the founders of American Trotskyism in the Communist League of America, which was later to become the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). At the time of her death in 1946, she was an honorary member of the SWP National Committee.

Konikow was not a supporter of James P. Cannon's faction within the Communist Party (CP). But she was one of the first within the American party to support the views of Trotsky's Left Opposition, and she won a group of five Boston-area party members to her views. After the 1928 expulsion of Cannon, Martin Abern and Max Shachtman for their support to the Left Opposition, Konikow was summoned to appear before the CP's Political Committee. She wrote a defiant protest letter to CP Secretary Jay Lovestone. As the Prometheus Research Library, the central reference archive of the Spartacist League/U.S., noted in the introduction to *James P. Cannon and the Early Years of American Communism* (1992):

> "After reading Konikow's letter to the November 2 meeting of the Committee, Lovestone commented that 'it is obvious from her letter that she is the worst kind of a Trotskyite, biologically as well as politically. The sooner that we throw her out the better for the party.' Konikow, a medical doctor and a pioneer of birth control, was unanimously expelled by the Political Committee. She founded the Independent Communist League, which published her letter in its first Bulletin, dated December 1928. Konikow's League merged forces with the expelled Cannon faction to found the Communist League of America in May 1929."

In *The History of American Trotskyism*, Cannon recalls a Boston meeting threatened by a gang of Stalinist hoodlums. The meeting was a success. As Cannon recalled, "Needless to say, my chairman on this historic occasion was Antoinette Konikow."

Militant


BULLETIN No. 1.

APPEAL FOR HELP!

INDEPENDENT COMMUNIST LEAGUE

WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY?

HOW IS THE R. C. P. AND ALL OTHER COMMUNIST PARTIES CONTROLLED BY ONE FACTION?

HOW DID THE PRESENT LEADERSHIP OF THE R. C. P. ATTAIN SUCH POWER?

Antoinette Konikow. First issue of *Bulletin* (December 1928), published by Konikow's Independent Communist League of Boston, printed her letter in support of Trotsky's Left Opposition.

Konikow was always a stalwart fighter for women's rights. In 1923, she published her handbook, *Voluntary Motherhood*, the first birth control manual by an American physician, written to educate her primarily female immigrant patients. It sold more than 10,000 copies in its first three editions. She was repeatedly hounded by Boston authorities for her work on birth control, and in 1928 she was arrested for exhibiting contraceptives in public (the case was dismissed). On her own initiative, Konikow traveled to the Soviet Union in 1926 to introduce an inexpensive contraceptive jelly she developed with John G. Wright, a chemist who was also her son-in-law and comrade and later one of Trotsky's translators. In 1931, she published *Physicians' Manual of Birth Control* to address the widespread ignorance in the medical profession itself.

One of Konikow's prized possessions was a photograph of Trotsky dedicated to her in Trotsky's own hand: "We are proud, my dear Antoinette, to have you in our ranks. You are a beautiful example of energy and devotion for our youth. I embrace you with the wish: Long Live Antoinette Konikow. Yours fraternally, Leon Trotsky, Oct. 28, 1938, Coyoacán."

* * *

The comrades have received me with warmth and friendship. It gives me tremendous happiness. The kind words written by Comrade Trotsky on his picture presented to me remind me of the greatest honor—the honor that was—given to comrades in Russia, the Order of Lenin pinned upon their breasts, I feel as if Comrade Trotsky has pinned the Order of Trotsky on my breast! Not that I am a hero-worshipper—for I have helped to pull down too many heroes from their pedestals. But in the last ten years of darkness of despair, the words of Leon Trotsky have been like a bell for a ship in distress, leading it to safe harbor.

Joined in 1888

In 1888, fifty years ago, I joined the Social Democratic Party of Russia. Life was as dark and hopeless as it may seem to many today. I was delighted to hear the words of Plekhanov at the first congress of the Second International: "Only the working class will lead the Russian revolution!" But the working class of Russia was spiritually even further away from us than the workers of the United States today. If anyone had told us at that time that 15 years later a strike of one and a half million workers would almost overthrow Czarism, and that 15 years after that the Russian soldier would turn his gun not only against Czarism but against the Russian bourgeoisie, we would not have believed it. We would have laughed. But it happened—***and it will happen again***. Only this time it will not take 30 years.

At Many Cradlesides

I have had to sponsor so many new organizations that I have often jokingly told my comrades that I feel like a mother always rocking a new cradle—and that is all wrong for me, for I am known as an advocate of birth control.

But I did rock the cradle of the Russian Social Democracy and out of it came a great giant, the Russian Bolshevik Party. After being expelled in the United States from the Socialist Labor Party, I soon began to rock the cradle of the Debs party, later the Socialist Party. It seemed to contain a healthy baby, but the war and the Russian revolution proved that there was a weak spot in its spine.

I then helped to rock another cradle, the cradle of the young vigorous Communist Party. The glory of those days of the great Russian Revolution shall never be forgotten—the tremendous enthusiasm for Lenin and Trotsky—the ten days that shook the world! But again things went wrong. "Socialism in one country" became the slogan. This meant not only socialism

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

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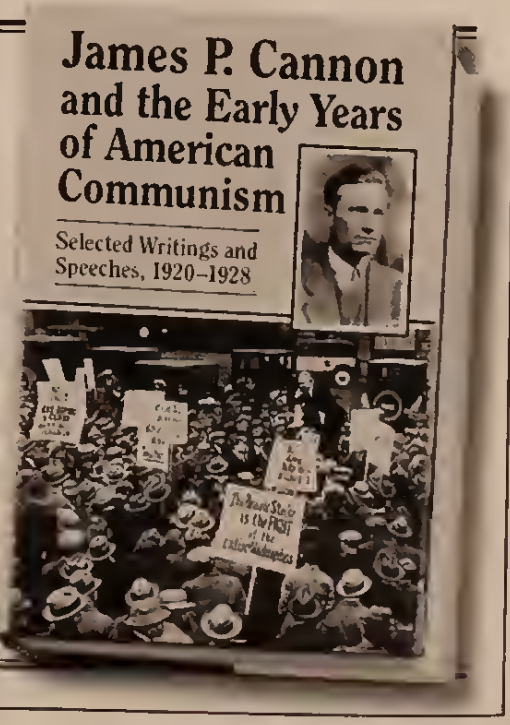


Joe Verret

Verret Family

1945–2010

Our comrade Joe Verret died on March 30 in Los Angeles after a four-year battle with leukemia. He was 64 years old. Joe fought to the end, enduring multiple bone marrow transplants and a final round of chemo in the hopes of seeing his daughter, Jasmine, graduate from high school in June. We join Jasmine and Joe's wife, Gloria, in grief for the loss of this deeply cultured fighter for humanity's future. Joe was a communist, a talented mathematician, a teacher by profession and a dedicated educator in the party. He was a founding member of the Spartacist League and a leading cadre of our organization from the day he joined in 1965.

Joe was instrumental not only in helping to recruit to the party many young people radicalized by the Vietnam War and other diverse currents of the New Left, but equally in training such recruits in Marxism and as members of a disciplined revolutionary organization. Like other young party leaders, he was active in various arenas of party work as the SL struggled to achieve political cohesiveness and national and international extension. Joe's ability to conduct himself as a Spartacist in a variety of situations reflected not only his strong character, but his hard recruitment on the Russian question and understanding of the need for a Leninist combat party.

Joe resigned in 2000 in Los Angeles, though he continued work with the Prometheus Research Library. As a sympathizer, he became increasingly close to the party again, especially as a valued mentor to the Los Angeles comrades. In April 2009, recognizing Joe's lifelong contributions and commitment to the SL, the Political Bureau voted him an honorary member of the SL/U.S.

Joe was born in New Orleans on 11 December 1945. His father came out of Cajun country, picked peppers on the Avery Island plantation and was later a member of the CIO's Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers union, where he was involved in a 1947 strike where black workers played a leading role. Joe's dad's stories about being a union member in the "open shop" Jim Crow South left a deep impression on him. Joe was always known by his comrades for his love of jazz, his talent for cooking, including rich, complicated New Orleans cuisine, and his infectious, ribald sense of humor. He and Gloria were famous for their hospitality.

Joe was the linchpin of our work in the South, as well as a leader of our early international work. A longtime sympathizer of the Spartacist League in New Orleans recalled meeting Joe in 1971 when he helped to win her and her comrades to Trotskyism. As she described it, "We were the most unserious, politically illiterate, pot-smoking, shoplifting, horny, contentious and mismatched bunch of unreconstructed New Leftists you ever saw.... And here came Joe, telling us to spit out our gum, sit up straight, and do our homework." Joe was tough. "Rumor had it," our sympathizer in New Orleans wrote, that he "was part alligator." In fact, he was fondly known as "The Gator."

Even as the leukemia was taking its toll, he continued to contribute to party work, recommending books on everything from science and medicine to education and dialectics. Last year, he gave a class to the Los Angeles branch on the history of the SL's work in the South. Just weeks before his death, Joe attended a February 20 Spartacist public forum in L.A., where he engaged in political discussions with several of the young people who attended. Joe recently wrote two important articles for *Workers Vanguard*. "The Decline of New Orleans" (*WV* No. 945, 23 October 2009) contained a valuable critical appraisal of *WV*'s propaganda on New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina and underscored the centrality of black longshore labor in the South. His "Notes on New Orleans" (*WV* No. 955, 26 March), which appeared in the last issue of *WV*, vividly demonstrated his intimate knowledge of the city.

Joe's erudition and breadth of knowledge were always at the disposal of the party, not least in educating younger comrades. Comrades in the L.A. branch often went to his house to discuss politics and books and watch movies from his enormous film library. These included highly political films on East Europe or the Near East as well as movies like *Southern Comfort*, set in the Louisiana bayou—"about my people," as Joe put it, flashing his trademark devilish grin.

Joe's political life began during the tumultuous days of the civil rights movement and Vietnam-era New Left radicalism. He was shaped by his struggle for integration in the South. Joe was a member of the Young People's Socialist League (YPSL), the youth group of the Socialist Party. He then joined the American Socialist Organizing Committee (ASOC), an offspring of YPSL's left wing. But as a fervent defender of the Vietnamese workers and peasants' struggle against U.S. imperialism, he left ASOC, which refused to call for victory to the National Liberation Front in Vietnam. He found the Spartacist tendency through a *Guardian* ad for *Spartacist* No. 1. Joe joined in 1965 and was elected an alternate member of our Central Committee at the SL's founding conference in 1966.

Joe was widely known and respected in the New Orleans left. The small group of comrades he led there were often involved in united-front defense work, including with black militants on the left wing of the Southern civil rights movement. The Deacons for Defense and Justice, formed in Louisiana in 1964, organized armed self-defense patrols to protect civil rights workers and black neighborhoods against KKK terror. New Orleans comrades visited Bogalusa chapter head Charles Sims in 1965. They raised funds for the Deacons, out of which came the slogan, "Every dime buys a bullet."

The New Orleans comrades held a united-front defense protest with SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) in 1968 to protest the cop killing of a black youth, after the NAACP called off a planned march. The protest came on the heels of Martin Luther King's assassination, and a massive police presence was expected. Our comrades contacted Charles Sims and requested assistance. As Joe recalled in his class for the L.A. comrades: "It's us and SNCC and it's like hundreds of cops are circling the demonstration.... I don't think we would have done it without the Deacons; we would have just probably gotten beaten up."

As communists working in the Deep South, our New Orleans comrades were subject to exceptional state surveillance and repression. The New Orleans Local was penetrated by three state agents almost simultaneously. The agents did their best to elicit "evidence" that the SL was engaged in or advocated violent or illegal activities. But as detailed in the 1967 Louisiana Joint Legislative Committee on Un-American Activities Report No. 9, "The Spartacist League and Certain Other Communist Activities in South Louisiana," all the agents had to admit that they never heard anyone in our organization so much as joke about violence. An internal party circular at the time noted that "the report is not a bad recruiting pamphlet for us" as it shows us to be genuine Marxists committed to socialist revolution and working-class rule.

As the organizer of the New Orleans branch, Joe was a special target of threats. As he later told the L.A. comrades: "I can tell you that when I would get death threats, I would be afraid. I spent weeks checking around the hood of my car to make sure it hadn't been wired for bombs. But it's a question of how you manage your fear, and the party's program is what gives you the ability to manage that."

Joe was elected to the Central Committee as a full member in 1969. That same year, at the height of the Vietnam War, he was drafted into the Army, following the SL's policy laid out in "On Draft Resistance: You Will Go!" (*Spartacist* No. 11, March-April 1968). Counterposed to the largely student "Hell no, we won't go!" protesters, as Marxists we understood that if drafted, forced to choose between the military and either prison or fleeing the country, we would join our class brothers and sisters in the military and try to win them to our class-struggle program. To that end, Joe and other comrades published *G.I. Voice* beginning in 1969, urging soldiers to exercise their democratic right to protest against U.S. imperialism's dirty war.

Joe, a well-known red, was kept in basic training in Louisiana for a year. He often recalled how two officers once took him on a long drive into the bayous, where he thought he was going to disappear. At the end of 1970, Joe was sent to Vietnam for a six-month call-up. Shortly after he arrived there, his weapon was taken away from him and he was put on desk duty.

Throughout his political life, Joe intervened on a broad range of domestic and international questions in the party. This included playing an important role in the party's work on the fight for black liberation. In 1974, at the Fourth National Conference of the Spartacist League, he served on the Black Commission. A year earlier, he had written a key document on the Russian question, focusing on guerrilla movements and the formation of the deformed workers states. Joe also played a prominent role in a 1985 internal party discussion on slogans against apartheid in South Africa.

In 1979, at our First International Conference, Joe was elected as a full member of the International Executive Committee, the leading body of the international Spartacist tendency, now International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). In the late '70s and early '80s he played a leading role in both our Canadian and British sections, including serving as National Chairman of the Trotskyist League of Canada. Joe's key fights in that section were "centrally against a narrow circle existence," as one comrade there recalled, and on the Russian question as Cold War II heated up. He was also a member of the Central Committee of the Spartacist League/Britain.

Joe was also stationed with the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand for several weeks in 1980 as a representative of the International Secretariat. After further international work, he returned to the U.S. in 1981 and served on the SL/U.S. Political Bureau during his brief stay in our center.

Joe led our former Atlanta Local from 1983 until 1996. In Atlanta, he was part of the leadership of a Partisan Defense Committee-initiated labor/black mobilization of 3,500 to counter a Klan provocation against Martin Luther King Day on 21 January 1989. Joe always had a hard-nosed sense of social reality in America, a product of being a communist fighter in the South. In a speech after a 1987 Democratic Party-led protest against the Klan in the racist backwater of Forsyth County, Georgia, Joe declared: "What you need is a modern-day version of General Sherman's army.... What you need is a workers government, in which the working class rules and intransigently goes after smashing racist reaction. And it's not necessarily going to be pretty." (Joe's speech is printed in "Anger Over Racist Attacks Derailed in Georgia," *WV* No. 421, 6 February 1987.) In 1996, Joe transferred to Los Angeles, where he spent the rest of his life.

"He came out of the bayou but rejected all backwardness," as Gloria put it on a Web site set up in Joe's memory (memorialwebsites.legacy.com/joeverret). We will miss Joe. We will miss his fine mind, his depth, his tenacity, warmth and wicked humor. But we also deeply appreciate that his role in educating and training Trotskyist cadres will continue to help our cause of building a revolutionary workers party as a section of a reforged Fourth International—the cause to which he dedicated his life.

1968 Teachers Strike Revisited

IG in Bed with Scabherders

On March 11 the Class Struggle Education Workers (CSEW), a lash-up of "unionized and non-unionized" school and university employees supported by the Internationalist Group (IG), sponsored a forum at CUNY Graduate Center called "Behind the Drive to Privatize Public Education: Where Racism and Class Intersect." Posturing as leading some "class-struggle wing" of students and teachers, the IG in fact provided a radical-sounding cover for the retrograde politics of union-busters, most graphically when panelist Sean Ahem bragged about strikebreaking in the 1968 New York City teachers strike. Speaking on the panel as a United Federation of Teachers (UFT) delegate and a member of the Grassroots Education Movement, the Coalition for Public Education, and Teachers Unite, Ahern proudly stated that, as a high school student in 1968, "we opened up the Liberation School, we crossed the picket lines." He continued, "This was seen as a progressive, radical thing to do, and I was a young student and I was a part of that."

The 1968 strike was sparked when Rhody McCoy, the newly appointed black superintendent of Brooklyn's Ocean Hill-Brownsville school district, sought to replace union teachers with non-union ones. Mayor John Lindsay and Governor Nelson Rockefeller pulled out all the stops to bust the union by mobilizing blacks and Latinos in the ghettos and barrios against the union movement, using the demagogic slogan of "community control" of the schools. Lindsay sought to whip up anti-union sentiment to legitimize New York State's 1967 anti-strike Taylor Law, which has been used time and again against public employee unions, not least the Transport Workers Union.

While denouncing the policies of then-UFT president Albert Shanker, a notorious Cold Warrior whose bureaucratic regime catered to racist sentiment, the Spartacist League stood with the union in a fight for its survival. We sought to link the struggles of the union and of black and Latino working people, circulating the leaflet reprinted on the facing page: "New York City School Strike: Beware Liberal Union Busters!" (13 November 1968). Most of the left came out in support of outright strikebreaking.

In the late 1960s, "community control" was a major slogan used by the ruling class, mainly acting through the Democratic Party, to *co-opt* a layer of young black activists. Many of these activists, including those who voiced white-baiting separatist rhetoric, became overseers of the segregated black ghettos. The same period saw the emergence of black Democratic Party mayors in a number of cities. One of these, Kenneth Gibson in Newark, attacked the teachers union. However, because the union had an integrated membership and a black woman president, the ensuing 1971 teachers strike had substantial support from the city's black population. The Newark teachers strike exposed the anti-union purpose of "community control" and black-separatist rhetoric in the 1968 UFT strike.

Former supporters of our organization who are well aware of this history, the IG supporters on the panel didn't let it stop them from assiduously pursuing an "alliance" with an apologist for strikebreaking. A preview of the lineup at the CSEW forum was given when Sean Ahern and IG supporter Marjorie Stamberg spoke on March 4 on WBAI's *Education at the Crossroads* program. WBAI was a mouthpiece for liberal union-busting during the 1968 strike, so it was no surprise when program host Basir Mchawi sought to smear the UFT as having "a negative impact on the educational system," asserting, "Many of us historically have had all kinds of problems with the United Federation of Teachers, historically going back at least to 1968." Sean Ahern called to "make a fundamental break with the past [Mchawi] spoke of." Far from defending the union, Stamberg added: "You mentioned that the UFT had been divided from the black community going back at least as far as 1968, but one of the things that I think has made us be able to overcome this lately is that [New York City schools chancellor Joel] Klein and [New York City mayor Mike] Bloomberg have simultaneously attacked the teachers union, the black community, the parents, all at once, and what has happened is that people have come together" as "allies that I haven't seen sioce 1968."

The alliance she was talking about was on display at the Marcb 11 forum—an alliance very reminiscent of the lineup in 1968. Stamberg enthused over Ahern's presentation and made a point of agreeing with him about the supposed "whitening" of New York City's teachers. Ahern had ranted about "white racial privilege"; Stamberg took a swipe at white teachers coming from Colorado (while saying she had nothing against Colorado!). Then Stamberg explained that "Sean and I have been arguing over the evaluation of the '68 teacbers strike." She went on to say: "I support the 1968 teachers strike" and "my position is you do not cross a picket line, period." However, she concluded that the '68 strike "paralyzed us, it was terribly damaging. It split black and Latinos from organized labor but something has happened now," adding that Bloomberg and Klein's attacks have "brought us all together as allies." So Stamberg and the apologist for scabbing could be "allies" and both agree the strike was "damaging."

A number of teachers in the audience spoke out cogently against the use of charter schools to pit some black and Latino parents against the teachers union. The decline of the quality of public education has been coupled with increased racial segregation and class inequality, so that public schools today are more segregated than at any time since the civil rights movement. The Obama administration's program for school "reform" means cutting funds, closing schools and laying off teachers, "reforms" that will hit impoverished inner-city schools the hardest. At the same time, in an orchestrated drive to bust the teachers unions, Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan are attempting to scapegoat the teachers unions for the abysmal state of public education in the U.S. In fact, in February the entire staff at Rhode Island's "underperforming" Central Falls High School was fired (see "Labor: Fight Union Busting Attack on Rhode Island Teachers!" *WV* No. 954, 12 March).

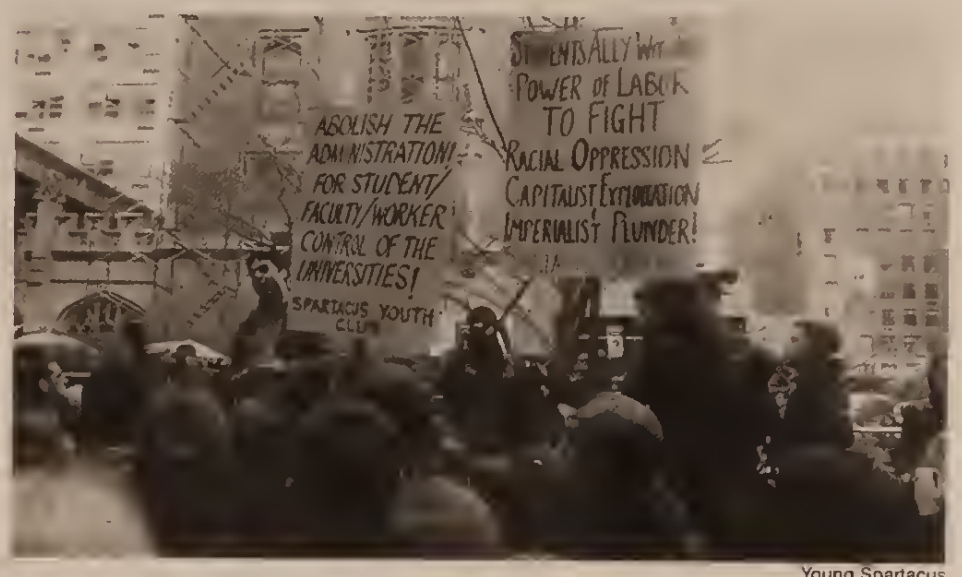
The capitalist rulers have profited immensely by sowing racist divisions among the working class, dividing native-born whites against immigrants, whites against blacks, blacks against immigrants and so forth, obscuring the fact that the class division between the workers and the capitalists is the primary dividing line in capitalist society. Pro-capitalist union bureaucrats play into this scheme as the "labor lieutenants of capital" within the working class; "liberal," "community control" union-busters run point for the bosses' ongoing war against the hard-won gains of the working class. Thus, although it took place over 40 years ago, the 1968 New York City UFT strike remains a live question today.

Against the unsavory lineup at the CSEW forum, a Spartacist supporter spoke early in the discussion round: "While at times the Intemationalist Group may sound 'revolutionary' in fine print, on the ground what's being pushed bere is crass reformism and providing a left cover for others on this panel—like the guy here who's with the Coalition for Public Education, whose founding convention featured a who's who of New York Democratic Party hustlers, and they also push a variant of 'community control'." Our speaker pointed people to our 1968 leaflet, saying, "We called for a radical alliance of teachers and black and Puerto Rican working people on the program and basis of opposition to the liberal union-busters and the understanding that the fight for free, quality education lies not simply in the classroom but in getting rid of the system. We defended the UFT against liberal union-busting in '68 and we defend it today despite its rotten, class-collaborationist leadership." But one of the panelists "crossed the picket lines and defended it here as 'progressive'." She nailed the IG for refusing to put forward anything that might alienate its bloc partners.

Another Spartacist supporter noted that the attacks on education are part of generalized attacks on the working class internationally. He called for "a party that fights for workers revolution, socialist revolution here and internationally...a point that they are not making." Forum facilitator Ajamu Sankofa—a CSEW member and a leader of the pro-Democratic Party lobbying coalition Private Health Insurance Must Go!—replied: "That party is now in formation." Not from this crew it isn't!

It was left to our comrades and the Spartacist literature they circulated outside the meeting to make the elementary Marxist point that the capitalist system, built on the bedrock of chattel slavery and racial oppression, cannot provide full social, political and economic equality for black people, but it has created the multiracial working class as its gravedigger. Black workers must play a key role in forging a revolutionary workers party that fights for socialist revolution to establish an egalitarian society where those who labor rule. This perspective is directly counterposed to the liberal, black-separatist and Third World nationalist ideologies pushed by those the IG is promoting.

Even though the IG couldn't answer our polemics against them, they could not contain their giddiness at the successful turnout they got building their "class struggle" movement of strikebreakers, liberals and fake Marxists. In her summary, Stamberg happily praised the discussion as a model. Then she admonished our speaker that she resented the "sister's" intervention about the 1968 teachers strike. This event showed the real face of the IG, in words and deeds. ■



Young Spartacus

New York City, March 4: Spartacus Youth Club signs at Hunter College protest in defense of public education.

Sinco/L.A. Times

Los Angeles, May 2009: Protest against teacher layoffs and class-size increases.

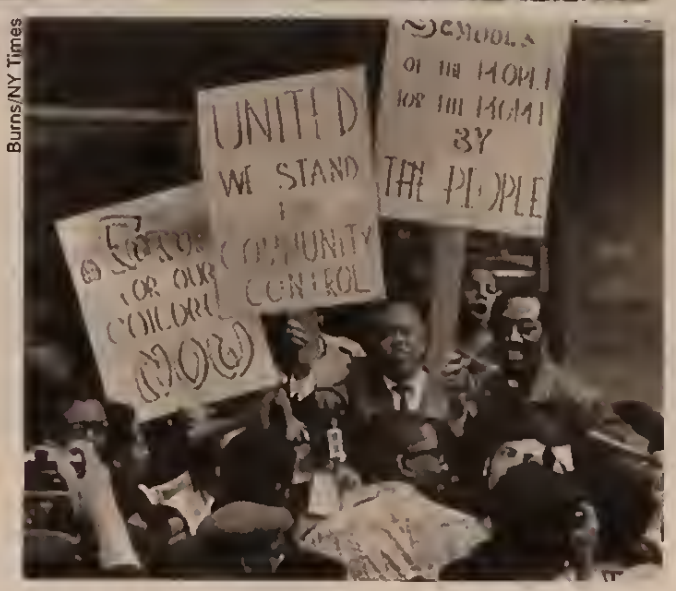
Spartacist Leaflet in 1968 NYC Teachers Strike

"Beware Liberal Union Busters!"

We reprint below the Spartacist League's 13 November 1968 leaflet distributed during our intervention into the New York City United Federation of Teachers (UFT) strike.

New York City has long been faced with an immense financial crisis. While corporations rake in millions of dollars, the City government has been unable to "find" the money to provide adequate public services. Liberal Mayor Lindsay has attempted to meet this crisis in part by trying to break the power of the public employee unions. From the Sanitationmen's strike (when Lindsay tried to call in the National Guard as scabs) to the current UFT strike, Lindsay has made it clear that he intends to break the unions. The Lindsay administration has fought a long war to legitimatize the Taylor Law, which prohibits strikes by public employees, on the grounds that such strikes endanger the "public interest." The teachers' strike has provided him with his most potent weapon so far, as the growing liberal sentiment against the strike has reinforced the spectre of the self-interested unions as enemies of the general public.

Bettmann



Burns/NY Times

New York City, 1968: Teachers vote to strike against union-busting. Right: Ocean Hill-Brownsville school district superintendent Rhody McCoy hands out "community control" anti-union signs.

"Community Control" Fraud

The City's financial crisis has hit the school system this year, a year in which the City has actually made the first cut in the school budget in many years. So all of a sudden Lindsay, whose cops maintain the daily oppression of the black ghetto, suddenly comes out for black "community control"—actually a new experiment in school decentralization funded by such "community-minded" organizations as the Federal government's Office of Economic Opportunity and the Ford Foundation. The concept of "the community" masks the question of *who* in the community controls the schools, and for what purpose. The real interests of black workers and their children are not geographic or even simply racial, but above all class, and as such are basically counterposed to the destruction of the teachers' union which, if successful, will only strengthen the hand of the bosses and the capitalist politicians who serve them against all unions in the city.

The demand for "community control" lacking a specific class content is even dangerous in some situations. The same group of people can be radical or reactionary depending on what aspect of their lives they are mobilized for. The same group of "ethnic" white workers who if approached on the job as workers will carry out a militant strike along with their black fellow workers can also, if approached as residents of their community, be capable of firing every black teacher in their district. We must recognize what classless "local control" could mean not only for teachers of "the other" race but also for rebels, radicals and "reds" of every stripe who will find themselves with only a broken union incapable of protecting their jobs in the aftermath of the substantial Wallace vote.

In Ocean Hill-Brownsville, "community control" has meant the appointment of a $30,000-a-year black administrator, Rhody McCoy, who was given a high degree of administrative autonomy, although he had no particular connection with the black population in the district. One of McCoy's first acts was to dismiss without due process a number of union leaders at J.H.S. 271. When 250 teachers walked out in protest, they were "transferred," after which non-union replacements were hired. This sparked the current dispute.

Were it not for the complicating racial factor, the central issue of union-busting would be clear. But the City has created a heavy smoke-screen by crying: the black ghetto children must be educated, we are helping by encouraging community control, and this racist union stands in the way. Using these arguments and some government-paid "anti-poverty" workers, Lindsay has swept the black community sentiment heavily against the union and has encouraged union-busting, school break-ins, etc.

Replace UFT Leadership

Unfortunately the [UFT president Albert] Shanker leadership has played into Lindsay's hands by taking a purely "business union" approach to defend itself, remaining indifferent to the general needs of the oppressed and exploited black population. Much of the union's propaganda has catered to conservatism and racial fears, with talk of "mob rule" and "extremism." This has exacerbated the racial division between the union and the black working people, thereby preventing a real solution to the crisis. The union's present rotten course of seeking help at higher levels of government (including an appeal to [New York governor Nelson] Rockefeller, who inspired the "community control" experiment, and requests for "protection" by the racist New York City police) can lead only to further alienation from the black population and disaster for the union.

The roots of the current impasse can be traced to last year's school strike and the narrow, self-interested approaches of the UFT and the middle-class Black Nationalists who put themselves forward as spokesmen for the "community." At that time the Spartacist League issued a leaflet ("Smash the Taylor Law," 24 Sept. 1967) which criticized both the gratuitous scabbing of Floyd McKissick and H. Rap Brown, which exacerbated the fears of the teachers that black militants would not support their demands for higher wages, and the UFT leadership's continuing indifference to the needs, fears and concerns of the black students and their parents. Under the heading "Support Ghetto Struggles" we warned: "the equally middle-class policy of 'professionalism' advocated by the UFT leadership has held the union largely aloof from many of the past struggles of the ghetto communities, widening the gap between teacher, student and parent. Such a situation [of UFT indifference combined with Black Nationalist calls for 'keeping the schools open'] provides a ready excuse for the development of racist attitudes." We called for a radical alliance of teachers with the doubly oppressed black and Puerto Rican working people and the first steps toward building a labor party to lead united, militant struggle against the liberal union-busters. Without such a radical alliance the situation could only have developed into the present battle—the teachers convinced they will meet with hostility and anti-union attitudes from the black militants and turning increasingly to conservative and even racist appeals in the attempt to find support elsewhere, the parents fed up with the UFT's unconcern with poverty and racism and bewildered by a strike which, if the rationale for the Taylor Law is correct, can be nothing but an act of racism and wanton viciousness on the part of the teachers.

A radical alliance must begin by pointing out that the central problem of black education lies not in the classroom but in the political-economic system of capitalism. The capitalist system needs the product of the ghetto schools not as creative human beings but as a pool of low-skilled and unemployed workers to keep the general wage level down. The Black Nationalists have not seen through the liberal myth that "becoming educated" is the way out of the ghetto for the mass of black and Puerto Rican youth. The black schoolchildren know that they will not find decent employment and a productive, satisfying life in adulthood, and even the most dedicated teachers become cynical in the face of the bitterness and disinterest of their students who realize that their "education" is a farce. No change in the *structure* of the school administration can "reform" ghetto education without a revolutionary transformation of the society itself.

"Left-Wing" Scabs

In the liberal arena such figures as Murray Kempton, Jimmy Breslin, the [then-liberal] *New York Post*, the *New York Times* and CBS News are screaming for the blood of the UFT. The liberal strike-breaking sentiment is not too surprising, since liberals consider the government the primary agent of change and "progress." But even so-called "revolutionary" and "Marxist" groups have been swept along by the liberal "local control" rhetoric. Such groups as Progressive Labor [PL], the Communist Party and the Socialist Workers Party [SWP] advocate simply crossing the picket line, and thereby busting the union, in order to break a "racist" strike. Even those groupings opposed to the strike should seriously consider the implications of the position that a worker is justified in scabbing whenever he disagrees with his union or does not want to strike, as it destroys the concept of a union as a body which acts together after determining its policies by a vote of the membership. For radicals to advocate scabbing only encourages any inherent racism and anti-radicalism among pro-union workers.

We ask PL and the SWP how they can now support the strikebreaking and the Ocean Hill-Brownsville administrators who justify the transfers of UFT teachers on the grounds that "we don't want any teachers who turned their backs on our children for six weeks" (to cite a statement made by one of McCoy's assistants over nation-wide television)—i.e. by going

continued on page 9

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BAY AREA

Thursday, April 29, 6:30 p.m.

Imperialism:
The Highest Stage of Capitalism

San Francisco State University
Cesar Chavez Student Center
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For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

The Cold War and the Civil Rights Movement

AP photos

Left: Demonstration in Birmingham, Alabama, 1963, against Jim Crow segregation. Right: State troopers attack protesters marching for voting rights in Selma, 1965.

Break with the Democrats! For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

We print below a Black History Month Forum given in the musicians union hall in New York City on February 20 by Workers Vanguard *Editorial Board member Paul Cone.*

With pictures of Charlie Parker, Thelonious Monk and Dizzy Gillespie—the fathers of bebop jazz—looking upon us I thought it would be appropriate to recall a short story called "Bop," first published in 1949 by the great writer Langston Hughes. Through his character, Jesse B. Semple, Hughes describes the origins of bebop. According to Semple, it's "From the police beating Negroes' heads. Every time a cop hits a Negro with his billy club, that old club says, 'BOP! BOP!... BE-BOP!...MOP!...BOP!'... That's where Be-Bop came from, beaten right out of some Negro's head into them horns and saxophones and piano keys that plays it."

PART ONE

That was written on the cusp of the civil rights movement. With some modifications, Semple's observations are no less applicable today. The billy club has been replaced by the retractable truncheon, the revolver has been replaced by the semi-automatic and the cops have added the Taser stun gun to their arsenal. In the first nine months of last year, nearly half a million men, women and children were subjected to the degrading "stop and frisk" by New York City cops—*84 percent* of them black or Hispanic. As Hughes' character, Semple, pointed out, "White folks do not get their heads beat *just for being white*. But me—a cop is liable to grab me almost any time and beat my head—*just* for being colored."

Welcome to our Black History Month forum. We study the history—often buried—of the struggles for black freedom, which are strategic for the American socialist revolution. Our pamphlet series is named *Black History and the Class Struggle* precisely to express the inextricable link between the emancipation of the proletariat and the fight for the liberation of black people in the U.S.

We meet here today a little over a year after Barack Obama became the first black president of the U.S.—the Commander-in-Chief of the most rapacious imperialist power on the planet. Obama governs on behalf of the capitalist class, whose rule is maintained on the bedrock of black oppression. Obama's election was hailed by bourgeois pundits and reformist "socialists" alike as the realization of Martin Luther King's "dream"—a dream that, as King put it in his famous speech at the 1963 March on Washington, was "deeply rooted in the American dream." Malcolm X saw things quite differently: "I'm one of the 22 million black people who are the victims of Americanism. One of the 22 million black people who are the victims of democracy, nothing but disguised hypocrisy.... I don't see any American dream; I see an American nightmare" ("The Ballot or the Bullet," 3 April 1964).

While Wall Street barons wash down lobster dinners with 25-year-old single malt Scotch—paid for by government bailouts—the past year has seen the devastation of the lives of many workers: the loss of jobs, homes, savings and medical coverage, hitting the black population disproportionately hard. I work near 125th Street in Harlem and regularly pass an ever-increasing number of apparently homeless and obviously desperate people asking for help to buy a cup of coffee or some food; blaring from the loudspeakers set up by merchants is Obama's voice boasting of "change we can believe in."

Obama has beefed up the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq, threatened crippling sanctions against Iran; he has built on the police-state measures implemented first by Bill Clinton and enhanced by George W. Bush in the name of the "war on terrorism," and escalated attacks and repression against immigrants. Before the election, the Spartacist League declared: "McCain, Obama: Class Enemies of Workers, Oppressed" (*WV* No. 923, 24 October 2008). We gave no support to any bourgeois candidate, Democrat, Republican or Green like Cynthia McKinney, a former Democratic Party Congresswoman supported by reformists like the Workers World Party.

Just as the reformists' forebears followed King to John F. Kennedy's Oval Office, today's reformists deliver their followers to Obama's doorstep. *Workers World* (27 November 2008) proclaimed Obama's election "a triumph for the Black masses and all the oppressed." Today, Larry Holmes still recalls the "shock and elation" while watching Obama's inauguration (*Workers World*, 18 February). The International Socialist Organization (ISO) enthused in their *Socialist Worker* (21 January 2009): "Obama's victory convinced large numbers of people of some basic sentiments at the heart of the great struggles of the past—that something different is possible, and that what we do matters." To the extent they have any influence, what the reformists do is prop up illusions in the capitalist Democratic Party.

The Demise of Jim Crow

The title of this forum is a bit of a misnomer. It's not narrowly about the Cold War. I want to try to explain a bit the context in which the mass struggles for civil rights took place. In the Programmatic Statement of the Spartacist League, we wrote regarding the civil rights movement:

> "The bourgeoisie eventually acquiesced to the demand for legal equality in the South, both because Jim Crow segregation had grown anachronistic and because it was an embarrassment overseas as American imperialism sought to posture as the champion of 'democracy' in the Cold War, particularly in competition with the Soviet Union in the Third World."

And that is roughly what I will be talking about. But not yet.

As Marxists, we see the motor force of history as the struggle between oppressor classes—today, the capitalist class, which owns the means of production like the banks, land and factories—and the oppressed classes. Under capitalism, this is the proletariat, workers who have nothing

Bettmann photos

Left: Unionists picket Woolworth's in New York City, 1960, as part of national campaign in solidarity with Southern civil rights sit-in movement. Right: Civil rights activists sit in at a lunch counter to protest segregation in Jackson, Mississippi, 1963.

but their labor power, which they sell to the capitalists in order to live. Capitalism is an irrational system based on production for profit, born "dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt" as Marx put it in his classic work *Capital* (1867). The capitalist rulers, who claim the banner of "freedom" and "civilization," have carried out mass murder and torture on an immense scale in their drive to secure world markets, cheap labor and raw materials. And history has shown that this system cannot be made to be more humane or the imperialist rulers more peace-loving. Nor can capitalism provide for the needs of the world's masses, despite the vast wealth it possesses.

In order to preserve their class rule, the tiny capitalist class has at its disposal the vast powers of the state—which at its core is made up of the army, cops and courts—and means of ideological subjugation through the schools, press and religion. The capitalist state cannot be reformed to serve the interests of workers and the oppressed. On the road to revolution, it must be smashed by the revolutionary proletariat, and a workers government established in its place.

A key prop of capitalism is to keep the working class divided along ethnic and racial lines, which in this country means foremost the segregation of black people. We fight for black freedom on the program of revolutionary integrationism: while the working class must fight against all instances of racist oppression and discrimination, genuine equality for black people in the U.S. will only come about through the smashing of capitalism, preparing the road to an egalitarian socialist order. This perspective is counterposed to liberal integration, which is premised on the utopian notion that equality for black people can be attained within the confines of this capitalist society founded on black oppression. It is also counterposed to go-it-alone black nationalism—a petty-bourgeois ideology of despair which at bottom accepts the racist status quo.

Freedom for blacks in the U.S. will not come about without a socialist revolution. And there will be no socialist revolution without the working class taking up the fight for black freedom. As Karl Marx wrote shortly after the Civil War, "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded."

Our model is the Bolshevik Party of V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky that led the October Revolution in Russia in 1917. This was the greatest victory for the working people of the world: it gave the program of proletarian revolution flesh and blood. The proletariat seized political power and created a workers state based on soviets (workers councils). The young workers state eliminated laws discriminating against women and homosexuals and recognized the right to self-determination of the many peoples oppressed under tsarist/capitalist rule. The Soviet government proclaimed the right of working people to jobs, health care, housing and education.

The Russian Revolution was not made solely for Russia, but was seen as the opening shot of a necessarily international struggle of labor against the rule of capital. It was an inspiration to the oppressed masses of the world and had a direct impact on the struggle of black people in the U.S. The American rulers have always seen a connection between the Russian Revolution and the struggles of black people in the U.S.—and rightly so. The Bolshevik Revolution was popular among wide layers of urban blacks and even among moderate black newspapers and organizations. The *Messenger*, published by prominent Socialist Party member A. Philip Randolph, who would later become a vicious anti-Communist, captured this sentiment with articles like, "We Want More Bolshevik Patriotism" (May-June 1919).

It was the intervention by the Communist International in the 1920s that turned the attention of the American Communists to the necessity of special work among the oppressed black population—a sharp break from the practice of the earlier socialist movement. After the Russian Revolution, J. Edgar Hoover railed that "a certain class of Negro leaders" had shown "an outspoken advocacy of the Bolsheviki or Soviet doctrines," had been "openly, defiantly assertive" of their "own equality or even superiority" and had demanded "social equality" (quoted in Robert Goldstein, *Political Repression in Modern America: 1870 to the Present* [1978]). The government immediately put together an apparatus of surveillance, harassment and terror that would be a model for the later FBI COINTELPRO (Counter-Intelligence Program) in the 1950s through the 1970s. COINTELPRO meant massive wiretapping, burglaries and surveillance against even tame civil rights leaders like King, and the killings of 38 members of the Black Panther Party and imprisonment of hundreds more. As Martin Dies, head of the witchhunting House Committee on Un-American Affairs declared in the mid 1940s, "Moscow realizes that it cannot revolutionize the United States unless the Negro can be won over to the Communist cause" (quoted in Gerald Horne, *Black and Red: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Afro-American Response to the Cold Wor* [1986]).

From the beginning, the young Russian workers state was surrounded and besieged by hostile capitalist countries. The Revolution prevailed in a bloody civil war against the counterrevolutionaries and the forces of 14 invading capitalist powers. But the poverty, backwardness and isolation of the country, especially following the defeat of the 1923 German Revolution, laid the ground for the development of a bureaucratic caste, led by Stalin, which expropriated political power from the working class. The nationalist outlook of the bureaucracy was given expression in Stalin's proclamation in the fall of 1924 of the anti-Marxist "theory" that socialism—a classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—could be built in a single country, and a backward one at that. In practice, "socialism in one country" came to mean opposition to the perspective of workers revolution internationally and accommodation to world imperialism—leading to the sellout of revolutionary opportunities—and in particular the propping up of capitalist rule in West Europe after World War II.

John Herman Williams

Robert F. Williams (center) with other members of the Monroe, North Carolina, NAACP chapter, 1957. Williams was suspended from NAACP in 1959 and driven out of the country in 1961 for organizing black armed self-defense against Klan terror.

Beinecke Library

Jamaican-born poet Claude McKay speaking at Communist International's Fourth Congress in Moscow, 1922. Right: First issue of *The Communist International*, 1919.

Despite the profoundly deforming bureaucratic means employed by the Stalinist regime, which undermined the Bolshevik Revolution's gains, state ownership of the means of production and economic planning made possible the transformation of what had been an impoverished, backward, largely peasant country into an industrial and military powerhouse within the span of two decades. The Soviet Union provided a military counterweight to U.S. imperialism, making possible the survival of overturns of capitalism in East Europe and the social revolutions in China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam.

We fought to the end to defend the Soviet degenerated workers state against imperialism and counterrevolution, while at the same time fighting for a proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist misrulers and restore the working class to political power. Today, we continue to defend the remaining deformed workers states of China, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea. The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92 was a world historic defeat, not merely for the working people of the former Soviet Union but also for the international working class. The collapse of the USSR has meant U.S./NATO imperialist slaughter from the Balkans to Iraq and Afghanistan—accompanied by devastating attacks on the workers and oppressed minorities domestically.

The Civil Rights Movement

We study past struggles—victories and defeats—in order to politically arm ourselves and the proletariat for future battles. There are very few historical conjunctures in which a small Marxist propaganda group with a few hundred members could within a few years have transformed itself into a workers party leading a significant section of the proletariat. The South in the early 1960s offered such a rare opportunity.

The mass mobilization of black people in the Southern civil rights movement, and the subsequent Northern ghetto rebellions, disrupted and challenged the racist American bourgeois order. It shattered the anti-Communist consensus and it paved the road for the mass protest movements that followed—against the U.S. dirty war in Vietnam, for the rights of women, gays, students and others.

The civil rights movement achieved important—though partial—gains for black people largely in the realm of *formal* democratic rights whose main beneficiaries have been a thin layer of the black petty bourgeoisie. Public facilities were desegregated, black people won the right to register to vote in the South, and mandated school segregation was outlawed. But the liberal-led civil rights movement did not and could not challenge the root cause of black oppression. The hellish conditions of ghetto life—the mass chronic unemployment, racist cop terror, crumbling schools, poverty and hunger (the "American nightmare")—which remain the lot of the mass of black people nearly 50 years after the Civil Rights Act was adopted are rooted in American capitalism. The civil rights movement smashed its head against this fact when it swept out of the South and into the North in the mid 1960s.

From its onset, the civil rights movement was dominated by a black middle-class leadership allied to Democratic Party liberalism. The aim of this leadership—whose most effective exponent was King—was to pressure the Democratic Party administrations of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson to grant formal, legal equality to blacks in the South. Walter Reuther's United Auto Workers (UAW) and Randolph's Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters—assisted by elements of the decomposing American social democracy like Bayard Rustin and Michael Harrington as well as by the Stalinized Communist Party (CP)—worked to keep the civil rights movement within the confines of bourgeois reformism and the Democratic Party. And this they did very well. Ultimately, millions of youth, whose opposition to racist oppression and growing animosity toward U.S. imperialist depredations were leading them to seek revolutionary solutions, were channeled into the Democratic Party of racism and war. In his classic work in defense of the Bolshevik Revolution, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (1918) Lenin nailed Karl Kautsky, the granddaddy of the later social democrats and reformists:

> "Even in the most democratic bourgeois state the oppressed people at every step encounter the crying contradiction between the ***formal*** equality proclaimed by the 'democracy' of the capitalists and the thousands of ***real*** limitations and subterfuges which turn the proletarians into ***wage-slaves***. It is precisely this contradiction that is opening the eyes of the people to the rottenness, mendacity and hypocrisy of capitalism. It is this contradiction that the agitators and propagandists of socialism are constantly exposing to the people, ***in order to prepare*** them for revolution! And now that the era of revolution ***has begun***, Kautsky turns his back upon it and begins to extol the charms of ***moribund*** bourgeois democracy."

If you didn't live through it, I think it's hard to appreciate how tempestuous and volatile this period was, and how the struggle for black rights dominated domestic politics for over a decade. That era has become sanitized in movies, newspapers, books and the accounts of many of its participants—even former militants from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Black Panther Party, who are today comfortably ensconced in the Democratic Party.

Now I'll confess, I was a bit young, only ten years old at the time of the March on Washington, for example, so I wasn't a participant in these events like some of my comrades. A lot of my focus that year was on the upcoming Dodgers/Yankees World Series; the Dodgers swept them. But even at that age and younger, I was surrounded by the images of the assassination of Medgar Evers, Mississippi governor Ross Barnett blocking the steps of the University of Mississippi to blacks, the burning churches, the vilification of one of my childhood idols, Muhammad Ali, when he appeared with Malcolm X by his side after winning the heavyweight title. I recall the fear that

continued on page 8

Civil Rights...

(continued from page 7)

Malcolm generated, seen in the eyes and heard in the voices of the bourgeois press corps and politicians, who in turn embraced the same conservative civil rights leaders whom they earlier castigated for wanting to move "too fast." I also remember the cities in flames, starting with Harlem in 1964.

Largely ignored by accounts of that period is the ferment in the North, where black people had already attained the formal rights blacks in the South were fighting for. But discrimination in housing was public policy. In New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Cleveland, Milwaukee and other cities of the North, black newcomers were forced into overcrowded ghettos, where they paid high rent for rat-infested slums; black children were sent to inferior schools, and black adults had few job opportunities and few, if any, public facilities. By 1962-63, there were as many protests in the North and West as in the South—for jobs, an end to segregated housing, and for school integration.

Fueling this rage was the grim reality that the economic advancement of much of the black working class—which came with wartime employment, U.S. industrial dominance and, most importantly, unionized jobs—was coming to an end. Between 1947 and 1963 Detroit lost 140,000 manufacturing jobs. In New York City, over 70,000 garment industry jobs were lost in the 1950s. The same was happening to meatpacking workers in Chicago and longshore, warehouse and shipbuilding workers in Baltimore, Newark, Oakland and Philadelphia. In large part this was because the capitalists were increasingly moving production to the South. Much of the industrial Northeast and Midwest was soon rendered rotting hulls. This was largely a product of the union tops' failure to organize the South—a failure that stemmed from the anti-Communist purging of militant organizers during the Cold War, the union tops' allegiance to the Democrats and failure to take up the fight for black rights.

New York Times

Newark ghetto upheaval, 1967. Poverty, unemployment and racist cop terror helped trigger ghetto explosions in the North in the 1960s.

On 13 May 1963, in solidarity with blacks in Birmingham, Alabama, who were fighting back against the racist terrorists and in protest against brutal cop terror in their city, some 3,000 black teenagers in Chicago pelted cops with bricks and bottles. In New York City, 1963 and 1964 saw thousands of Harlem tenants forming tenants councils, withholding rent and winning services and repairs from the slumlords. This was met with a vicious bourgeois campaign of racist hysteria. The purpose was, as we wrote at the time, "preparation and justification for the smashing, through police terror, of the coming stage of the Negro rights struggle" ("Negro Struggle in the North," *Spartacist* No. 2, July-August 1964). In July of 1964, New York City cops exploited the protests against the police killing of 15-year-old James Powell to justify a full-scale offensive to smash every sign of these struggles. Such cop terror as that in Harlem would trigger many of the ghetto upheavals that took place in over 300 cities over the next three years. In New York, as the cops sealed off Harlem, we Spartacists launched the Harlem Solidarity Committee, which organized a protest of 1,000 in the garment district.

Adding to the civil rights movement's turbulent character was the fact that activists were on a daily basis forced to confront and grapple with questions of where their movement was going. Such questions ultimately bring to the fore the nature of the capitalist state, class divisions in society, the "rottenness, mendacity and hypocrisy of capitalism"—leading to the heart of the question of reform vs. revolution. This played out in the first instance in the issue of armed self-defense or the strategy of "non-violence," which was the calling card of King. For this, King won the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize. This prize itself has no noble history. It was also later awarded to such peace-loving people as Menachem Begin, Henry Kissinger, Jimmy Carter and now Barack Obama.

Howard L. Bingham

Malcolm X with Muhammad Ali in New York City, 1963.

In 1960, Trotskyist activists got a first-hand view of how the question of armed self-defense was perceived by student activists during a visit to Southern black campuses shortly after the student sit-in movement was launched at the Greensboro, North Carolina, Woolworth's in February. While the student militants were for peaceful picketing—perfectly correct as they were outnumbered—the influence of pacifist ideology was slight, and, notably, the students undertook self-defense measures to protect their campus and themselves from the racist terrorists.

Armed defense of meetings of black activists in the Klan-ridden South had been a well-established tradition, stemming not least from the efforts of the Communist Party to organize sharecroppers in the 1930s. This had been a necessary measure to make sure such gatherings took place without anybody being killed. This tradition however was anathema to the accommodationist wing of the civil rights movement led by King. Be clear: this question was not an issue of whether or not an individual whose home or family was under attack would repel the invaders. In a well-known 1959 statement, King himself acknowledged this basic human impulse. The issue was quite different. By pledging non-violence, the civil rights leaders were pledging allegiance to the white power structure, asserting that the movement could not go beyond the bounds set for it by the liberal wing of the ruling class represented by the Democratic Party. To say that the civil rights movement had the right to defend itself against racist terror was to say that you didn't accept the rules of the capitalist ruling class and its racist "democracy."

The ISO portrays King's statement as part of a "debate" with black militant leader Robert F. Williams. This was no "debate." King's statement was used by the NAACP leadership in suspending Williams as president of the Monroe, North Carolina, chapter. Williams was targeted by the state and ultimately driven out of the country in 1961 for organizing black self-defense against KKK terror. To King's argument that "violence" by black Americans "would be the greatest tragedy that could befall us," Williams responded, "I am a man and I will walk upright as a man should. *I will not crawl!*" (quoted in Timothy B. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power*, 1999). We defended Williams. In 1965, the SL initiated a fund-raising campaign for the defense of the Deacons for Defense and Justice in Bogalusa, Louisiana, who also organized armed self-defense. In doing so we advanced our class perspective—the revolutionary mobilization of the working class independent of the capitalist rulers.

During the civil rights movement, as government forces, not only the Southern municipalities but at the federal level, either stood by or facilitated the beatings of activists, the question of the nature of the capitalist state was brought to the fore. In part, dealing with such issues accounted for the receptivity among students to Marxist literature during that 1960 trip to the South I just referred to. Notable as well was the absence of the social democrats and Stalinists, which also provided openings for Marxists, and the distrust by many student activists of the adult leadership groups that acted as a brake on the movement—specifically including King and preachers identified with him.

The RT's Fight for Revolutionary Integrationism

It is during these years that our organization originated as the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) opposition within the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). (Among the founders of the RT were the former editors of the Trotskyist *Young Socialist*, who had initiated a nationwide campaign of picket line protests at Woolworth's in support of the Greensboro sit-in.) Our strategic perspective was to transform the left wing of the civil rights movement into a revolutionary workers party capable of leading much of the black working class and impoverished petty bourgeoisie in the South.

The SWP had for decades been the Trotskyist party in the U.S. It maintained a revolutionary course through the difficult World War II years and the immediate period thereafter. In 1941, under the thought-crime anti-Communist Smith Act, 18 Trotskyists and Minneapolis Teamsters leaders were sent to prison by the Roosevelt administration for their opposition to the imperialist slaughter of World War II. During the war, the SWP took up and publicized the defense cases of black soldiers victimized for opposition to Jim Crow segregation. In the aftermath of anti-black riots in Detroit in 1943, they fought for flying squadrons of union militants to stand ready to defend blacks menaced by racist mobs.

In contrast, following Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941, the Stalinist CP hailed U.S. entry into World War II in December and worked overtime to enforce the trade-union bureaucracy's "no strike" pledge. They demanded that the black masses forsake their struggle for equality in the interest of the imperialist war effort. The SWP viewed black liberation as the task of the working class as a whole, and intervened in the struggle against racial oppression with a militant integrationist perspective. The party won hundreds of black recruits, including a major breakthrough in Detroit. However, under the intense pressure of the Cold War period, most of them left the party over the next few years.

By the early 1960s, the SWP had lost its revolutionary bearings and tailed non-proletarian class forces, seen domestically in its policy of abstention from the Southern civil rights struggle and later embrace of black nationalism. By 1965 it had become a thoroughly reformist party. As opposed to the SWP majority, the RT fought the party's criminal abstentionism and pointed out that the young radicals would not come to a Marxist program simply by virtue of their militancy—the intervention of a revolutionary party was necessary. Building a revolutionary vanguard necessarily meant participating in and building a revolutionary leadership in

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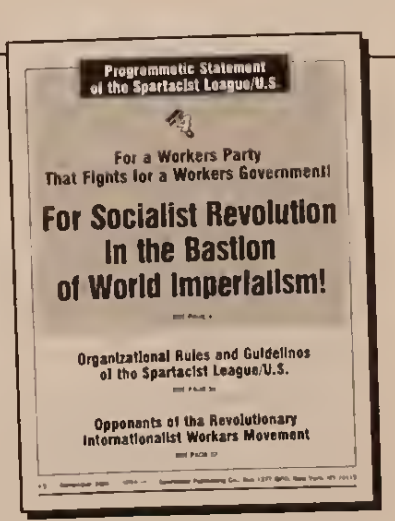

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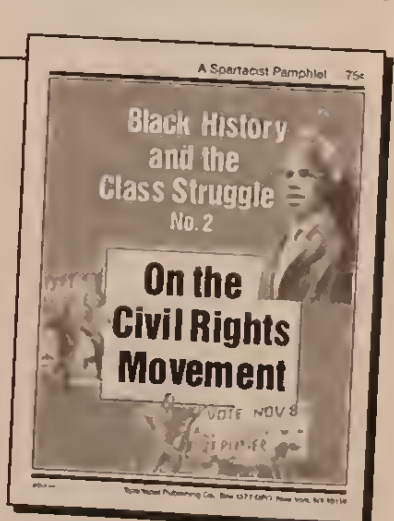

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the current struggles of the working class. The RT fought inside the SWP for the party to seize the opportunity to recruit black Trotskyist cadres to their ranks. The RT put forward a series of demands linking the fight for black rights to broader struggles of the working class and addressing immediate needs such as organized self-defense and union organizing drives throughout the South.

Many SNCC activists were open to a revolutionary perspective. Shirley Stoute, a black member of the RT, received a personal invitation to work with SNCC in Atlanta, which the SWP majority had to accede to. Then they called her back to New York on a pretext a month later. After a bitter political fight over this and other questions, the RT was expelled from the SWP in 1963-64, going on to found the Spartacist League in 1966.

In an August 1963 document, "The Negro Struggle and the Crisis of Leadership," the Revolutionary Tendency wrote: "We must consider non-intervention in the crisis of leadership a crime of the worst sort." Had the SWP remained a revolutionary party and concentrated its forces in the Southern civil rights movement, it could have won to Trotskyism a large fraction of those young black radicals who eventually became black nationalists. After being expelled from the SWP, we intervened with our small forces in the civil rights movement in both the South and North. We called on militants to break with the Democratic Party. Our call for a Freedom Labor Party was an axis to link the exploding black struggle to the power of labor, North and South. As we elaborated in "Black and Red—Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom," adopted at the founding conference of the Spartacist League/U.S. in 1966:

> "Ultimately their road to freedom lies only through struggle with the rest of the working class to abolish capitalism and establish in its place an egalitarian, socialist society.
>
> "Yet the struggle of the Black people of this country for freedom, while part of the struggle of the working class as a whole, is more than that struggle. The Negro people are an oppressed race-color caste, in the main comprising the most exploited layer of the American working class.... Because of their position as both the most oppressed and also the most conscious and experienced section, revolutionary black workers are slated to play an exceptional role in the coming American revolution....
>
> "The victory of the socialist revolution in this country will be achieved through the united struggle of black and white workers under the leadership of the revolutionary vanguard party. In the course of this struggle unbreakable bonds will be forged between the two sections of the working class. The success of the struggle will place the Negro people in a position to insure at last the end of slavery, racism and super-exploitation."

Nihon Denpa News, Ltd.

Spartacist

Left: 1968 Tet Offensive by North Vietnamese and National Liberation Front fighters was a powerful blow against U.S. imperialism. Right: Spartacist banner at New York antiwar demonstration, 1970. Spartacists fought for victory of Vietnamese workers and peasants.

The Rise of the Civil Rights Movement

The civil rights movement did not just fall from the sky. The elimination of legal segregation cannot be portrayed as an idea whose time had come, as the fulfillment of American democracy's supposed "moral mission," as the realization of the ideals of the Declaration of Independence or, as Martin Luther King claimed, the cashing of a promissory note from the "founding fathers" to blacks whose ancestors were enslaved. As I mentioned earlier, the Jim Crow system, designed to control and terrorize blacks in the rural South, had become anachronistic—i.e., it no longer served the needs of the U.S. bourgeoisie. This is important to understand.

The Civil War, America's second bourgeois revolution, had smashed the slave system, paving the way for the development of industrial capitalism in the U.S. as a whole. But after the betrayal of Reconstruction by the Northern bourgeoisie, "the Negro was left in the South in the indefinite position of semi-slavery, semi-serfdom and semi-wage slavery" as then-Trotskyist Max Shachtman put it in his 1933 piece "Communism and the Negro" (reprinted as *Race and Revolution* [2003]). Sharecropping and tenancy formed the labor backbone of Southern agriculture. Sitting atop this was the system of Jim Crow, the systematic legal segregation of black people in the South enforced by legal and extralegal violence. It was designed to prevent blacks from voting, becoming educated or fighting for their rights. When blacks did challenge Jim Crow—either by personally refusing to follow its rules or, more rarely, by organizing against it—they faced racist terror, whether by the local sheriff or the Klan (who were often one and the same). At least 3,000 black people were lynched between the end of Reconstruction in 1877 and the dismantling of Jim Crow in the 1960s.

Black people in the U.S. constitute a race-color caste integrated into the capitalist economy at its lower rungs while socially segregated. As historic Trotskyist leader Richard S. Fraser noted:

> "Discrimination and prejudice in the rest of the United States derives directly from the southern system, feeds upon it, and like racial discrimination throughout the world is completely dependent upon it.... In every possible way it [the capitalist class] perpetuates the division of the working class by establishing throughout the entire nation the basic reciprocal relations between discrimination, segregation and prejudice which are so successful in the South."
>
> —"The Negro Struggle and the Proletarian Revolution" (1953), reprinted in "In Memoriam—Richard S. Fraser: An Appreciation and Selection of His Work," *Prometheus Research Series* No. 3, August 1990

Fraser added, "the scar of race antagonism" serves to fortify and stabilize "the structure of American capitalism by dividing the population into hostile racial groups, who find it difficult to get together in defense of their common interests against the master class."

The industrial needs of both world wars, and the murderous terror blacks faced in the South, led to mass emigration out of the South and into Northern and Western industrial centers. Rural sharecroppers were transformed into proletarians in modern mass production industries. Following the strikes in the 1930s that formed the CIO labor federation, black workers were integrated into powerful industrial unions.

At the same time, by the 1930s, Southern agriculture in this most advanced capitalist country was still economically backward, retaining significant remnants of the slave system. In search of cheaper labor markets, and to accommodate the economic needs of World War II, American capitalism had been forced to abandon its earlier conception of the agrarian South as mainly a source of raw materials and very limited industrial development. By the Depression, textile, iron, coal, steel and chemical industries had been developing in the South. The urbanization and industrialization of the American South during and after World War II created large concentrations of black workers, and proletarianized poor agrarian and middle-class whites. This created a clear identity of interests between white and black exploited industrial workers, establishing conditions for the emergence of broader class struggle and the struggle for black freedom. The practice of landlords and sheriffs picking up isolated tenants, sharecroppers or black transients at will, and forcing them into the prison slave-labor system (powerfully depicted in the book *Slavery by Another Name* [2008] by Douglas A. Blackmon) was not very effective when dealing with black workers concentrated in factories—particularly if organized into unions.

For black people, the Deep South in the early 1950s remained a racist totalitarian police state. When black soldiers came back from integrated units in the Korean War, they swore they would no longer submit to Jim Crow. The emergence of a mass movement of blacks in the South that not only protested but also defied racist legality posed a problem for the Northern bourgeoisie, which controlled the federal government. They could either go along with the suppression of the civil rights movement by the Southern state authorities and local governments, or they could utilize the federal government to favor policies that would introduce to the South the same bourgeois-democratic norms that existed in the rest of the country.

Dominant sections of the Northern bourgeoisie concentrated in the Democratic Party opted for the latter. They would use the federal government to pressure, but not compel, their Southern class brethren to grant democratic rights to blacks. The Eisenhower and Kennedy/Johnson administrations engaged in a continual series of compromises between the civil rights movement and Southern authorities. At the same time they did very little to prevent the violent suppression of civil rights activists by the Southern authorities and sometimes collaborated in that suppression. For instance, when asked what the government would do about attacks on civil rights activists, Kennedy answered, "We'll do what we always do. Nothing."

It is to this wing of the bourgeoisie that the leaders of the civil rights movement shackled the fight for black freedom. The bourgeoisie could acquiesce to ***partial*** gains for blacks—desegregation of public facilities, voter registration, as well as a degree of school integration—as these did not undermine their class rule. Moreover, continued denial of civil rights to blacks in the South was a liability to the ambitions of U.S. imperialism internationally. In short order, as the federal government granted civil rights concessions, the NAACP and other civil rights organizations and celebrities would be signing on to the Cold War against the Soviet Union and anti-communist witchhunts at home—even as they found themselves in the gun sights of the McCarthyites, HUAC and their Southern replicas.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

'68 Strike...

(continued from page 5)

out on strike in previous UFT actions which the SWP and PL supported! We ask these organizations how they can ignore the blatant anti-union, anti-strike attitude of McCoy and his supporters. These "Marxists" in the SWP and PL are taking the easy way out by labeling the social-democratic UFT leadership as "racist" and washing their hands of the union instead of fighting in the union against Shanker for the correct policies. Serious radicals must ask themselves what *New York City's black population will gain* by the destruction of the UFT; by the legitimatization of the Taylor Law and the phony, classless rhetoric that strikes are against the "public interest"; by the replacement of UFT teachers by docile, hand-picked teachers who have no weapon of struggle against the Board of Education; by the attempt to direct the anger and frustration of the poor working people of Ocean Hill-Brownsville against the teachers rather than against the system which guarantees the continuation of their oppression.

Militants in the UFT must fight to replace the Shanker leadership and its conservative and dangerous policies of "professionalism," elitism toward other trade union struggles and condescension toward the black working people. The union must recognize the militant parents as their needed allies against the liberal union-busters and must seek a radical alliance of teachers and militant parents and students based on student-teacher-parent control of the schools.■

New York Times

New York City, July 1964: Spartacist-initiated Harlem Solidarity Committee rally in garment district to mobilize working-class support for ghetto residents besieged by cop terror.

Health Care...

(continued from page 1)

more recently begged him to hold tough on the public option. Yesterday, trade-union bureaucrats like AFL-CIO head Richard Trumka drew lines in the sand around the issue of the public option, while threatening to withdraw support if union-negotiated health policies were taxed. But no longer. Now they downplay the tax on these supposedly opulent union health benefits. After all, 2018 is a long way away. But the 2010 mid-term elections are just around the corner. Union bureaucrats now plan to campaign strongly against those Democrats who voted against the bill and redouble their search for really, truly "progressive" Democrats, while holding Obama's feet to the flame of popular pressure. This quest is similar to Ponce de Leon's search for the fountain of youth.

For Socialized Medicine

In contrast to what is available in the United States, health care in the European "welfare states" seems luxurious. This is no accident. These benefits were ceded, mostly after the Second World War, to placate working-class militancy in societies where the advanced layers of the proletariat were not averse to entertaining thoughts of socialist revolution. Such thoughts and aspirations were inspired by the 1917 October Revolution in Russia. Even with the degeneration of the Soviet Union under the Stalinist bureaucratic usurpation of political power beginning in 1923-24, the planned economy that survived provided all with a job, health care, education and housing. It is similarly no accident that the capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR in 1991-92 was followed by havoc and precipitous societal decline there, with life expectancy plummeting. Today, as a result of this world-historic defeat, the consciousness of workers around the world has been thrown back, albeit unevenly, to the point where politically advanced workers no longer identify their struggles with the goals of socialism. And the benefits that were once wrested from the various ruling classes of Europe are under attack.

At home, the American bourgeoisie has faced no such challenge to its rule. America's rulers have very successfully wielded anti-black racism, anti-immigrant nativism and sexual bigotry to preserve their class rule. The giant class battles that led to the formation of the CIO in the 1930s and the social struggles of the 1950s and '60s did not result in the formation of a mass proletarian party of even reformist dimensions. And the reforms that issued from these conflagrations—whether health care concessions from the bosses or governmental reforms such as Social Security and Medicare—were correspondingly modest, but gains nevertheless. Today, in the absence of any significant working-class struggle, the current health care reform has more in common with the gutting of retirement benefits, the slashing of educational opportunities and the disappearance of the good, or any, job that now face poor and working people.

That the U.S. is the only major industrialized country on the face of the planet without a national health care program is, in large part, testament to how the race-caste oppression of black people has been used by America's rulers to divide and weaken the working class. Cries against "big government" have long been synonymous with axing social programs such as health care and welfare, with these painted as a drain on the tax dollars of "hard-working folks" to benefit the ghetto poor.

We say that all must have access to medical care at no cost, including access to abortion and contraception. We are for socialized medicine—the expropriation of the parasitic health care and drug companies, which are an immediate threat to the well-being of just about everyone in this country. We call for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and free abortion on demand. As we wrote in *WV* No. 943:

> "Free, quality medical care for all should be an elementary right. But achieving that will require a genuine socialist assault by the multiracial working class to rip the 'health' industry out of the hands of the profit-gorged insurance giants and drug companies. Only with the destruction of this entire capitalist system of exploitation, which measures human life in dollars, can the wealth generated by those who labor be committed to providing the highest level of medical care for all and eradicating the poverty and hunger that condemn countless millions to a life of misery, disease and early death."

America Needs Workers Revolution

Such health care benefits as the multiracial working class has won have been the product of militant class struggle against the bosses. The dearth of strikes over the past decades helped pave the way for the exploiters to butcher health care, pensions and other union gains with impunity. And they have gotten away with it thanks to the acquiescence of the union misleaders, who share the bosses' concern of maintaining the profitability of American capitalism.

There is plenty of justified fear and apprehension, especially among unionized workers and the elderly, over the health care "reform." But with the labor movement on its back and the trade-union bureaucrats actively collaborating with the Obama administration, opposition to the bill has served as a boon to the Republicans and far right.

Today's "militants" are the racist militiamen and reactionary Christian fundamentalist types who have been mobilized by the Tea Party movement, which is supposedly anti-tax although there have been no tax increases of significance in years.

Corbis

Cuban nurse cares for newborns in hospital maternity ward. Planned, collectivized economy enables Cuba to provide health care to all.

Indymedia

Rally in support of UFCW grocery workers strike, Inglewood, California, January 2004. Defense of health benefits has been central to many labor struggles.

Mistakenly believing that the black man who now occupies the White House is interested in significantly improving the lot of working people, blacks and the poor, these yahoos now rise in defense of a testosterone-dominated "white America" that is threatened not by what they ludicrously claim is a "socialist Obama" but merely by demographic realities.

Obama is seen as one of "them" by the racist Tea Party types. In fact, he is the Commander-in-Chief of the most vicious, racist and powerful imperialist power on the planet. The usual Democratic hype of "justice" and "reform" for working and black people, who are the base constituency of this other party of the bosses, is laid aside once the votes are counted. With that party's most recent ascension to dominance in Congress and most statehouses and major city administrations, immigrants face increasing victimization and the right of women to abortion is further threatened, with abortion providers murdered and clinics closing. Meanwhile, the focus of U.S. imperialism's unending wars, which are designed to preserve America's dominance as its economic strength declines, has been shifted from Iraq to Afghanistan. Working people and the oppressed—not the fat-cat bankers and Wall Street hustlers—are the ones who are paying and will continue to pay for this most recent eruption of capitalism's anarchy and decay.

The social debris that constitutes the Tea Party movement would be confronted by a revival of labor struggle. Programmatically, any such revival must link the struggle against all exploitation and injustice with the fight for black equality. This in turn demands the forging of a revolutionary proletarian party committed to the overturn of American imperialism through socialist revolution. All of this cannot go forward unless the pro-capitalist bureaucrats who control the trade unions in this country are driven from their positions of power and replaced by class-struggle militants who understand that the bosses and the workers share no common interest.

The normal rejoinder to this Marxist perspective by those leftists who would reform this decaying capitalist order is that one begins with a small step to the "left," like Obama's election. Then when the Democrats disappoint, those who elected them will take another step to the left. By the reformists' lights, Obama and the Democrats have disappointed, and so it is time for another step to the left. Don't hold your breath.

A cogently articulated variant of this perspective is provided by Workers World Party, complete with references to "the class struggle" (but *not* socialist revolution). Writing on the health care legislation, *Workers World* (24 March) declared:

> "The Democratic Party leadership has given in all along the line. The workers, oppressed communities, students and youth all have a stake in this struggle. It can be united with the struggle for jobs, against the budget cuts and foreclosures, and to save public education. All these fronts in the class struggle form the basis to come together in People's Assemblies or other organs of popular power to unite to launch a powerful, anti-capitalist movement."

The "fight the right" perspective of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) is even more anodyne. In a 24 March article, *Socialist Worker* online complains, "What a twisted outcome to the opportunity that greeted Barack Obama and the Democrats a year ago—massive public sentiment in favor of transforming the dysfunctional health care system." The ISO's answer to this "twisted outcome" is provided in a 31 March article:

> "For many people who are sick and tired of conservatives getting their way, the bill's passage signaled a potential shift in the political winds in Washington. So after months when it appeared that the right was making a big comeback, the health care reform could translate into a growing confidence that working people can make real progress today after all....
>
> "We deserve much better. To get it, we have to build independent organizations and movements that take on pro-business, anti-worker policies—whether they're put forward by Republicans or Democrats."

Here, there are not even the words "class struggle," let alone the suggestion that capitalist rule itself is inherently "pro-business" and "anti-worker."

In spelling out its program of pushing the Democrats to fight against the Republicans' "Fascist Agenda," the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) goes so far as to make common cause with America's slaveowning "founding fathers." The RCP writes in *Revolution* online (4 April):

> "The Republicans are for *tearing up and rewriting the social contract forged by the founders of the United States in the U.S. Constitution*—and in particular, the concept of the U.S. as a secular nation.
>
> "The Democrats are convinced that this agenda—for a Christian fundamentalist theocracy based on extreme individualism and brutal repression—is n*o*t a viable way to maintain the U.S. as the world's dominant superpower. Nor do they see this as a viable way to re-cohere domestic social stability of the U.S....
>
> "As conflict between rival sections of the ruling class intensifies, and even breaks out into open clashes [guess which side the RCP is on], the legitimacy of the *entire* old order could be called into question" (emphasis in original).

All these reformists argue that it is disruptive to their slog toward goodness for us to expose their (sometimes implicit, sometimes explicit) support to "democratic" American imperialism, as this supposedly divides the "movement." The reality is that working people's lives are being savaged. Their children's futures are turning to dust. In all quarters it is realized that the path will continue to go downhill, albeit with occasional feeble upside pulsations. The anger of working people is both deep and just. The problem is that they see no alternative to imperialism's decay. Against the reformists and the trade-union bureaucrats they tail, we underline that the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution remains the beacon of progress for all humanity.

The various would-be reformers of the capitalist order are in one way or another adamantly opposed to the path of international proletarian revolution that was the banner of that historic victory. Thus, they lull the working class with pipe dreams as a way forward. The only successful proletarian overturn of capitalist rule to date occurred because the Bolshevik Party convinced the working masses, through its relentless exposure of the treachery of the reformists, that the only way forward was to smash the bourgeois order through proletarian revolution. The perspective of the International Communist League and its U.S. section, the Spartacist League, is to forge revolutionary working-class parties that fight for new Octobers.■

ILWU...

(continued from page 12)

by executing them. This was merely par for the course for a company that has left a trail of broken unions, brutal repression of indigenous peoples, torture and death in its wake.

Between 1969 and 1972, an Australian subsidiary of Rio Tinto backed by the Australian government opened its copper mine on the island of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea (PNG). The indigenous peoples of the island were driven from their land. This brutal repression provoked an uprising that closed the mine in 1989. Bougainville's population, which sought its independence from PNG, was then besieged by the PNG government, backed by the mining giant and the Australian Labor Party government. A ten-year military blockade was instituted, and at least 10,000 people were killed between 1990 and 1997.

In the 1970s, Rio Tinto opened its uranium mine in Namibia, which was then militarily occupied by the South African apartheid regime. A UN report at the time described the company's operations there as being "mined by virtual slave labour under brutal and unsafe conditions." In more recent years, continued apartheid-style segregation and racist discrimination against black workers at Rio Tinto in Namibia as well as its Pilabora copper mine in South Africa have provoked strike and wildcat actions by miners unions in both countries.

For years, Rio Tinto has carried out a union-busting offensive against workers at its Australian operations, which include uranium, iron ore and coal mines. Refusing to negotiate with the unions, the company offered workers individual contracts with higher wages if they quit the union. In 1995, the company's declaration of war against striking workers at its Weipa bauxite mine led to coal miners and maritime workers shutting down the docks and pits in Australia for days. Aborigines, who had been driven off their land when the Weipa mine was founded in the early 1960s, joined the picket lines and formed a strike support group. The strike was also supported by the Bougainville Freedom Movement.

This powerful solidarity against Rio Tinto was demobilized by the Australian trade-union tops, who are guided by the same treacherous politics as their American counterparts: preaching the lie of a partnership between labor and capital, obedience to the bosses' laws, reliance on the capitalist courts and flag-waving nationalism. A significant factor in the labor statesmen's sellout of the Weipa struggle was their desire to defuse the situation for the benefit of the Labor Party in elections that year. The labor misleaders' sabotage of the fight against Rio Tinto in 1995 helped pave the way for an all-out attack on the powerful Maritime Union of Australia three years later.

Namibian

February: Miners at Rio Tinto's Rössing Uranium Mine in Namibia demonstrate over working conditions. Miners around the world have been at the receiving end of union-busting assaults by the giant mining conglomerate.

Similarly, a defeat for the Boron miners could be a body blow to the ILWU, which is increasingly the last bastion of union power in the West Coast ports. What is needed is an internationalist class-struggle fight based on the elementary understanding that the interests of the workers are irreconcilably counterposed to those of the bosses, whatever flag they fly under. Instead of the deadly trap of American patriotism, the workers should be guided by the words of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' *Communist Manifesto*: "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries, unite!"

Lessons of the 1974 Boron Strike

A generation ago, in 1974, the bosses turned the Boron mine into an armed camp to smash a strike by the miners. In the course of the bitter 132-day strike, miners were arrested, shot at and viciously beaten. In the end, the strike was defeated at a cost of some 400 miners' jobs. As we wrote at the time: "ILWU Local 30 was decisively smashed because the union failed to keep scabs from going in and out of the plant and failed to stop shipments of scab borax. This was despite the fact that *ILWU longshoremen* were doing some of the shipping. The company, U.S. Borax, achieved record production using salaried employees and scabs recruited from Los Angeles, San Diego and other cities" (*WV* No. 60, 17 January 1975).

At the time, the ILWU International was headed by the union's founder, Harry Bridges, whose supposed tradition of class struggle is hailed today by the likes of Jack Heyman and other left-talking ILWU bureaucrats. In fact, the defeat of the Boron strike was seen by the American bourgeoisie as a big win for their side against a union with a lot of power that was not brought to bear. An article in the December 1974 issue of *Fortune* magazine made the defeat a model for union-busting bosses across the country, declaring: "A mine in the Mojave Desert might seem an unlikely place for a band of white-collar scabs to take a stand against a militant union. But managers, salesmen, and office workers, doing jobs they'd never done before, gave some refreshing lessons to top management."

In the aftermath of the Boron defeat, employers at the small KNC Glass Company near Oakland, California, were emboldened to launch a union-busting attack on the plant's workforce, which was organized by ILWU Local 6. The company did not prevail, thanks to Local 6 union militants, who were supported by *Workers Vanguard*. The union militants' leaflet, demanding "Defend KNC Glass Strike! Mass Union Pickets Against Scabs! Don't Handle Scab Goods!" brought an immediate response. A picket of 75-100 backed the company off its threat to bring in scabs. When it was learned that four truckloads of glass were bound for shipment from the Oakland docks to the plant, members of Teamsters Local 70 and ILWU Locals 10 and 34 refused to handle the loads. Local 6 bureaucrats later attempted to victimize the union militants.

As we wrote in "KNC or Boron—Victory or Defeat?" (*WV* No. 62, 14 February 1975):

> "The union leaderships, including the 'progressive' Bridges regime in the ILWU, are committed to pro-capitalist business unionism which worships every letter of bourgeois legality. Under such leaderships, unions scab on each other (AFL-CIO craft unions crossed picket lines at Boron) and tamely they will submit to injunctions against mass picketing or proscriptions against 'secondary boycotts.' "The labor bureaucracy dooms the unions themselves to an ignominious end unless it is uprooted and replaced with class-struggle leadership."

Today ILWU Local 6, which once organized many hundreds of warehouse workers in the Bay Area region, is little more than a shell. With the passive acquiescence of the ILWU tops, the majority of warehouse jobs were moved inland by the employers, where they are overwhelmingly non-union. This has contributed to the increasing isolation of longshoremen and left the ILWU smaller and weaker.

The Boron miners' battle poses the vital necessity of reviving the unions as fighting organizations of the working class. The labor misleaders, complicit in the gutting of the unions, must go. The fight to replace them with a new leadership based on a program of class struggle is at bottom a political question. The starting point must be the unconditional independence of the working class from the capitalist class enemy and all of its parties and state agencies. The workers need their own party, an internationalist multiracial workers party that will aim to do away with the entire system of capitalist wage slavery. When the wealth of this country belongs to those whose labor produced it, the American working class can lead the fight for an international planned socialist economy that will rid the world of the depredations inflicted on the working and oppressed masses by the imperialist rulers. *Victory to the Boron miners!*■

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Konikow...

(continued from page 2)

in no other country, *but no socialism in any country*.

I began to rock another cradle and today the baby is ten years old. Who can deny that it is a sturdy, strong young fellow? The Socialist Workers Party is the only bright ray that today penetrates the horror of present-day nightmares.

I saw the beginning of the Second International and its fall. I saw the beginning of the Third International and *its* fall. Now together we launch the Fourth International which will accomplish the tasks betrayed by the Second and the Third.

A Magic Word

We live now in the atmosphere of impending war. My war memories remind me of many encounters. I was sent on tour by the German-language federation of the S.P. to speak in German at anti-war meetings. That was no easy task at the height of the war frenzy. Many times comrades would approach me, pale and trembling, begging that I speak on another subject. They pointed to German detectives and the sheriff sitting in the crowd. Often I felt like weakening—but there was one magic word that gave me strength to do my duty. I tell it to you comrades—it may again help you. The magic word was *Liebknecht*.

Before I conclude, let me say a few words to the youth. No sermons or admonitions, for you do not need them! I am proud of you. I want to tell you that I envy you, your youth and vigor. I would like to be 50 years younger to work with you, for your task in the coming years will be the most important in human history. You have great monsters to fight, Fascism, Stalinism. It was easier to work under the Russian Czar than under Stalin, easier under the German Kaiser than under Hitler.

Militant

Photograph dedicated to Antoinette Konikow by Leon Trotsky on the fiftieth anniversary of her entry into the Marxist movement.

An Unsoiled Banner

But you have better weapons than we had, more knowledge, the experience of 50 years of the leadership of the greatest living genius of the revolution, Leon Trotsky.

We place in your hands a banner unsoiled. Many times it was dragged into the mud. We lifted it up and lovingly cleansed it to give it to you. Under the red banner of Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky, you will conquer.

And when that great moment arrives, pause for a moment and think of us, who will not be with you at that glorious time, and say: "Comrades, sleep in peace. The work has been done."■

WORKERS VANGUARD

ILWU: Don't Handle Scab Borax!

For International Labor Solidarity with Locked-Out Boron Workers

Nearly 600 workers, members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 30, are in a battle against a massive union-busting offensive by the giant Rio Tinto mining conglomerate at the U.S. Borax mine in the small Mojave Desert town of Boron, California. The Borax miners have been locked out for over two months as the company aims to enforce a contract that would allow it to hire non-union labor; to cut wages whenever it wants; to slash full-time jobs and turn them into part-time positions with little to no benefits; to rip up work rules and reorganize work hours, assignments and shifts at its whim; and to impose mandatory overtime. The Boron mine produces about half of the world's borax, which is used in numerous products like soap, fertilizer and, most importantly, many types of glass. Hundreds of scabs and security thugs from J.R. Gettier & Associates, hired by Rio Tinto, are running operations at the mine, producing scab borax.

The Boron miners' fight has evoked widespread sympathy and support from organized labor in California and unions internationally from Australia to South Africa to Canada, many of which have been on the receiving end of strikebreaking, union-busting assaults by Rio Tinto. But the top leadership of the Boron miners' own union, the ILWU, has not even stopped the processing of borax by ILWU members. Solidarity is more than a few fine words of support and donations of food and money. What is needed is the mobilization of *labar actian*, most importantly through dockworkers, rail and other transport unions "hot-cargoing" (refusing to handle) scab borax!

It is not for want of solidarity with the Boron workers that workers at the privately owned Rio Tinto terminal on the docks in Wilmington, California, members of ILWU Local 20, are continuing to work scab borax. These ILWU members have been kept on the job by the union misleaders who bow in homage to the bosses' laws banning hot-cargoing and other "illegal" labor actions, like building mass pickets that no scab would dare to cross. Having worked overtime to help get Obama elected to the White House, the labor bureaucrats are striving to maintain class peace for the Democrats. ILWU longshoremen and Local 20 processing plant workers told *Workers Vanguard* that scab borax is trucked from Boron into the Wilmington plant, where it is processed, loaded into containers and then trucked to other docks in the L.A. area and elsewhere.

Joan Sekler and Jeric Wilhelmsen

Locked-out Rio Tinto miners confront cops in Boron, California. ILWU borax workers have been locked out for over two months.

In February, the Executive Board of ILWU Local 10 in San Francisco passed a motion put forward by left-talking local bureaucrat Jack Heyman. Declaring the ILWU "has already pledged full support" (!), the motion calls on the International Dockworkers Council, an affiliation of dockworkers unions from around the globe, to demand that transport workers internationally refuse to handle scab borax. Real labor solidarity begins at home! It must start with hot-cargoing borax by the ILWU itself!

Among the labor officials praising the strategy of the ILWU tops is Ken Riley, president of International Longshoremen's Association Local 1422 in Charleston, South Carolina. Following a solidarity rally with Boron miners on February 16, Riley told Mike Davis (see "Labor War in the Mojave," *Nation*, 29 March):

> "The ILWU is doing a terrific job marketing Boron's importance to the rest of the labor movement. Internationally, our unions understand that we have to organize the logistics chain, from producers to transport to distributor to retailer. This is a new model of power for the labor movement, like industrial unionism in the 1930s, but adapted to the reality of globalization."

Publicizing a labor struggle is a first step. But the point is for labor to then stop the "marketing" of the borax mined by the scabs! Instead, the ILWU tops have substituted solidarity rallies and "moral witness" protests for coordinated action. Such tactics, far from a "new model," are a well-worn losing strategy. No amount of public outcry can replace getting the bosses where it hurts: shutting down the flow of their products. Whether turning back Rio Tinto's union-busting assault or organizing the unorganized in the ever-growing chain of world trade, what is needed is the kind of hard-fought class struggle through which the industrial unions were founded.

Rail workers from the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen (BLE) have refused to take their trains across the borax miners' picket lines. But the purpose of the labor principle "picket lines mean don't cross" is to *stop* the production and shipment of scab goods. Instead, the BLE tops have allowed the trains to be taken across the lines by managers and then returned outside the mine, where BLE members transport the scab borax. According to ILWU workers, the scab borax is then transported to non-union docks on the Gulf of Mexico, particularly in Houston. There it is shipped out around the world to be offloaded and transported by other workers, many of them in unions which themselves are under attack by the shipping, mining and transportation industry magnates.

Dispatcher

Maritime workers express support for the Boron miners at International Maritime Conference in New Zealand, October 2009.

Fight the Bureaucrats' American Chauvinism!

In this face-off with the world's third largest mining company—with uranium, copper, coal, gold, iron ore, industrial diamond and other operations in 40 countries around the world—international labor solidarity is key. But this is undermined by the labor bureaucracy's flag-waving American patriotism. The latest example is a leaflet by the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor calling for a protest picket against Rio Tinto at the British Consulate in L.A. on April 16 (protests are also planned in San Francisco and Seattle). The leaflet, done up in red-white-and-blue, declares: "A British-owned company wants to starve our workers into submission.... Together we will send a message... You can't starve out AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL."

This is nothing more than an alibi for America's capitalist rulers, who are the authors of union-busting and the soaring joblessness, hunger and poverty of the masses of workers, blacks and immigrants in this country. In competition with its imperialist rivals for ever-greater profits, the aim of the American bourgeoisie is indeed to pummel workers all over the world into submission to their interests. And the bureaucrats, who preach the lie of a partnership between the workers and their "own" exploiters, particularly expressed in chaining the unions to the Democratic Party, have long served as the handmaidens for the resulting destitution. Now they portray the fight against Rio Tinto in Boron not as a class-struggle fight of the working class against the capitalist class enemy but rather as a defense of America against a "foreign-owned company."

Such chauvinism easily slides over into blaming foreign workers for "stealing American jobs." It is poison to international working-class solidarity and serves only to foment the racist and ethnic hostilities that have been so ably wielded by the U.S. rulers to keep the working class divided. It is in this same vein that Rio Tinto cites the lower wages of Turkish borate miners, whose union sent a delegation to Local 30 in support of the locked-out miners, as a rationale for its union-busting in California.

There is no question that Rio Tinto has a long and savage history. But American-owned companies, backed by the military might of the U.S. imperialists, have inflicted their own ravages on the workers and oppressed of the world. Nor is it a big step from complaining about foreign-owned companies to supporting the U.S. ruling class in its trade wars against the other imperialist powers. The same logic has been used to justify lining up behind the U.S. imperialist bourgeoisie when trade wars exploded into military conflicts—such as World Wars I and II—the ultimate means for rival capitalist states to secure foreign markets and spheres of exploitation. It is the sons and daughters of the working class who have been and will be used as cannon fodder to fight for capitalist America against its foreign competitors.

Boron is a small desert mining town of some 2,000 people. But the whole history of Rio Tinto, a multinational conglomerate based in England and Australia, powerfully drives home that the workers' fight is and must be an international one.

The company got its start in 1873, funded by British capital, to mine the Rio Tinto copper deposits in Spain. In the midst of the Spanish Civil War in 1937, the head of the company, Sir Auckland Geddes, applauded General Franco for eliminating militant miners from its operations

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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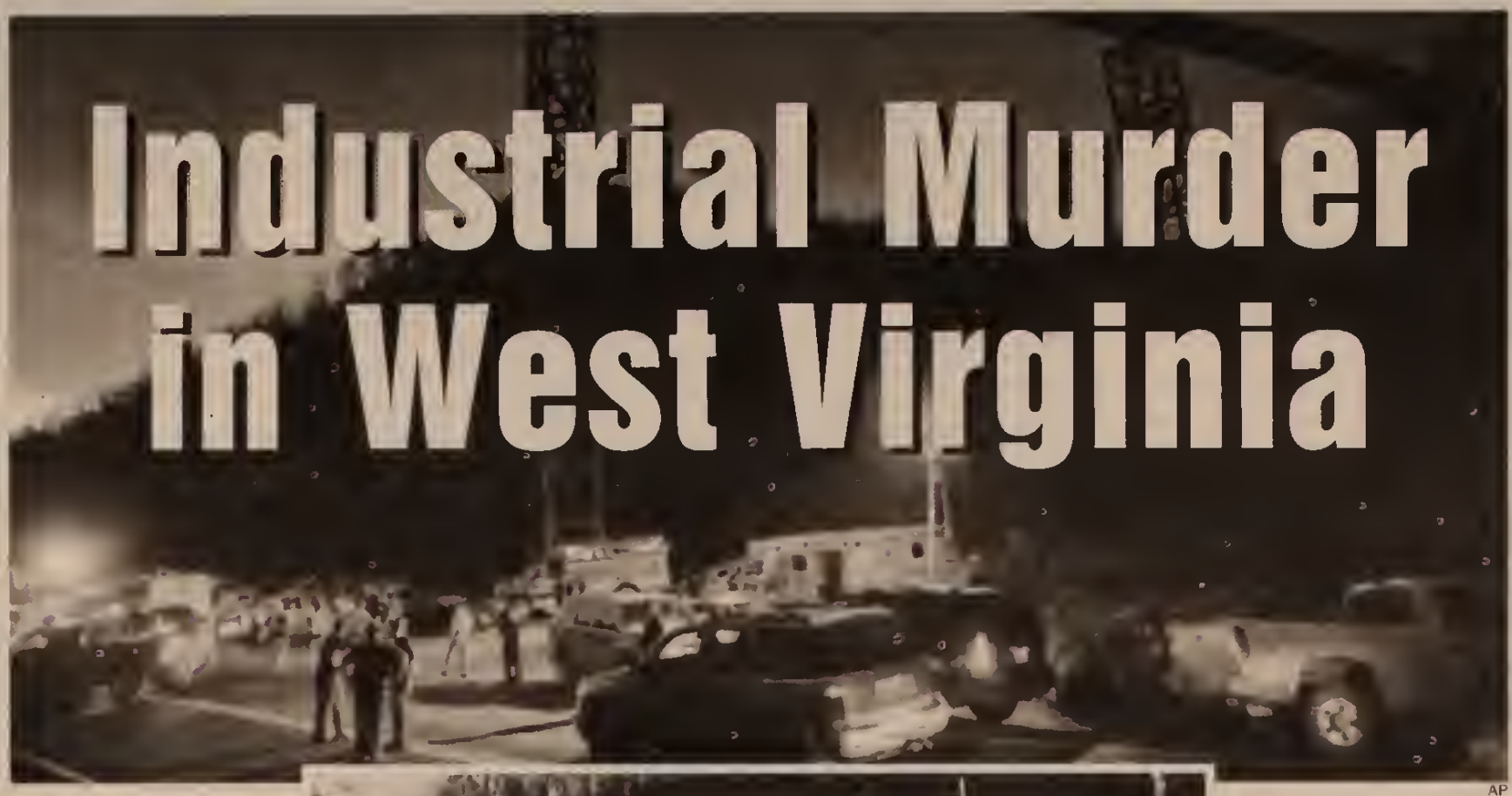
No. 957 | GCU C-701 | 23 April 2010

Organize Non-Union Mines!



AP

Getty

Top: Entrance of Massey Energy's Upper Big Branch coal mine following April 5 disaster, which killed 29 miners. Above: Candlelight vigil on April 10 for workers killed in methane gas explosion.

It was a devastating blast, collapsing walls, twisting iron rail tracks like pretzels and, in the words of one of the survivors, engulfing miners as if they were "right in the middle of a tornado." All told, the lives of 29 miners, ages 20 to 61, were claimed on April 5 at the Upper Big Branch coal mine in Raleigh County, West Virginia, the largest death toll in a single U.S. mine disaster in 40 years. This massive explosion, likely caused by a lethal combination of ignited methane gas and coal dust, was outright industrial murder by the Massey Energy coal bosses with the complicity of the state and federal governments. Conditions in the mine were so unsafe that one victim, Carl Acord, who had worked in the mines for 34 years, told his family he was worried about going to work that Monday. Another victim, Josh Napper, whose shift was sent home from work on the Friday before the explosion because of ventilation problems, wrote a goodbye letter to his fiancée, daughter and mother that weekend in the expectation that he wouldn't live long working in that deathtrap.

For distraught family and friends, grief mixed with revulsion for Massey CEO Don Blankenship. When he and other company officials showed up outside the mine in the early morning hours after the explosion, the crowd hurled invectives—and a chair. Blankenship was sent scurrying into a quick exit under police escort. In a bid to defuse outrage, Governor Joe Manchin later called for all underground mines in West Virginia to halt production on April 16 to "evaluate safety practices."

What should have happened is a national work stoppage by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) in memory of the non-union Upper Big Branch miners and as a statement of the union's intent to launch an aggressive campaign to organize the unorganized mines across the country. But such a course of action would require some elementary impulse for class struggle, as opposed to the craven appeals of the UMWA bureaucracy to the bosses' government. Had the UMWA tops unchained the union's power in any one of a number of strikes against Massey over the past 20 or more years, this disaster might have been prevented.

The deaths of the Upper Big Branch miners are a warning to workers everywhere that the forging of a class-struggle labor movement is a matter of life and death—not just in the mines but in meatpacking, public transport and throughout industry. To the capitalist bosses, the lives of workers are expendable in the service of the bottom line. The only way to establish and enforce safe working conditions is through mobilizing labor's power. The pro-capitalist union bureaucracy sacrifices the interests, and the very lives, of workers on the altar of class collaboration, hamstringing labor's power through its reliance on capitalist politicians and government agencies. The union tops' class collaboration is exemplified by their overwhelming fealty to the Democratic Party of Barack Obama, of which they are an integral part.

No less than the Republicans, the Democrats are a party of and for the capitalist class—the difference being that while Republicans make no bones about oppressing working people, the Democrats do the same while proclaiming themselves "friends of labor." Whereas George Bush tapped company executives to head the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), Obama appointed Joe Main, a former safety official for the UMWA, to the post. UMWA head Cecil Roberts enthused, "The workers have one of their own running this agency right now." But what difference did that make to the miners at Upper Big Branch?

The capitalist rulers are waging an unrelenting war on the right of workers, the poor, immigrants and black people to live any kind of decent life. In the face of a global economic recession, itself the product of the irrational capitalist profit system, the capitalists who have looted the economy rake in hundreds of billions in government bailout money while the working class and the poor are driven into deeper deprivation, homelessness and misery. Accepting the capitalist profit system and acting as enforcers of class peace, the labor bureaucracy has overseen the precipitous decline of the UMWA and other unions. Meanwhile, the capitalist rulers are using the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression to further attack the unions—already at their weakest point since the 1920s—and to push through deeper cuts in wages, benefits and pensions.

The fight to mobilize the unions in struggle against the employers must be based on the elementary understanding that the interests of labor and capital are irreconcilably counterposed. Labor must be mobilized independently of the bosses, their parties and their government. The capitalist government, from the local and state to the federal level, is nothing other than the executive committee of the capitalist class as a whole. What is necessary is a political struggle to replace the union misleaders with a leadership dedicated to the political independence of the working class and the fight for a society in which those who labor rule. As we wrote after an earlier mine disaster that killed twelve workers at the Sago mine in West Virginia in 2006 ("West Virginia Mine Disaster: Capitalist Murder," *WV* No. 862, 20 January 2006):

> "Only when the working class rips the means of production out of the hands of the corrupt, obscenely rich capitalist class and establishes a planned socialist economy can the health and safety of every person be ensured. That requires the forging of a multiracial workers party, leading all the exploited and oppressed in the struggle for socialist revolution."

No Reliance on the Feds!

West Virginia was once UMWA country. Just 30 years ago, 95 percent of West Virginia miners were unionized, compared to under 25 percent today. It is no mystery

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U.S. Atrocities in Iraq and Afghanistan: Imperialist S.O.P.

U.S. helicopter crew member brags, "Right through the windshield! Ha ha!" in leaked video showing slaughter of civilians in Baghdad in 2007.

The recently released video showing a U.S. Apache helicopter firing on Iraqi civilians in 2007 vividly exposes what is standard operating procedure for the imperialist occupiers in Iraq and also in Afghanistan. WikiLeaks, which released the video last month, said it had got the footage from whistle-blowers in the military.

After getting permission from their commanders, the helicopter pilots opened fire on the unarmed crowd in Baghdad, killing most of them. One of the pilots gloated, "look at those dead bastards," to which the other replied, "nice." As a wounded Reuters cameraman crawled away from the carnage, a van of civilians pulled up to aid him. The pilots then asked for and received clearance to strafe this van, killing the cameraman and others in the van and wounding two children in the front seat. When U.S. ground troops arrived on the scene and reported the wounded children, one pilot told the other, "Well, it's their fault for bringing their kids into a battle." Twelve people were killed that day, including two Reuters employees.

When asked about the video, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates defended the pilots' actions, excusing it as a result of "the fog of war," adding, "we've investigated it very thoroughly." Indeed, this video is but the tip of a very grisly iceberg. The very nature of imperialist occupations and counterinsurgency operations means that everyone in the occupied country is "the enemy."

U.S. forces have always employed the mass slaughter of civilians in their imperialist wars and occupations. The mass roundups and detention in torture centers like Abu Ghraib and Bagram are also part of the "democratic" imperialists' store of "counterinsurgency" techniques. This is the case under either party of capitalism—Democratic or Republican—as is plain for all to see in the case of Obama's "surge" in Afghanistan, as well as the lethal drone attacks in Pakistan. ***For the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. and allied forces from Afghanistan and Iraq! Hands off Pakistan and Iran!***

In Iraq, the U.S. has pulverized what was once one of the more advanced countries of the Near East. By some estimates, more than 1.2 million people have been killed in Iraq since the 2003 U.S. invasion, this on top of some 1.5 million killed in the decade before through UN starvation sanctions. Meanwhile, the occupation of Afghanistan, which has been escalated by the Obama administration, involves daily atrocities by U.S./NATO forces against that country's population.

In February, U.S. Special Forces troops killed two pregnant women and a teenage girl in eastern Afghanistan in a raid in which two Afghan government officials were also killed. An initial attempt by the U.S. military to cover up that story, claiming the women were killed by knife wounds administered earlier, unraveled after Jerome Starkey of the London *Times* exposed what happened. As Starkey reported in the London *Times* (13 March): "In a statement after the raid titled 'Joint force operating in Gardez makes gruesome discovery', Nato claimed that the force had found the women's bodies 'tied up, gagged and killed' in a room." Later, the U.S.-led military command in Kabul admitted that its forces had, in fact, killed the women and all the others. A later article by Starkey (5 April) reported: "US special forces soldiers dug bullets out of their victims' bodies in the bloody aftermath of a botched night raid, then washed the wounds with alcohol before lying to their superiors about what happened, Afghan investigators have told *The Times*." The family had some 25 guests and musicians on the night of the attack to celebrate the naming of a newborn child.

While the U.S. has carried out massive atrocities against the peoples of Afghanistan and Iraq, it has also met substantial resistance. We recognize that the Sunni or Shi'ite communalists in Iraq or the Islamicist fanatics of the Taliban in Afghanistan who are currently engaged in combat with the U.S. occupiers and their lackeys are murderous enemies of genuine national or social liberation. Nonetheless, when these insurgents aim their blows against the U.S. forces and their puppets, such acts coincide with the interests of the international proletariat. Every victory for the imperialists encourages more predatory wars; every setback serves to assist the struggles of working people and oppressed the world over.

The horrors being played out today in Afghanistan and Iraq are the present-day expressions of the choice posed since the advent of the imperialist epoch: socialism or barbarism. As we noted in "U.S. Imperialism's Torture, Inc." (*WV* No. 826, 14 May 2004):

> "Capitalist society was born in blood; modern imperialism continues the brutal practices of mass murder, torture and humiliation that accompany exploitation of labor and the ceaseless struggle between competing imperialist forces to dominate the world. From the Belgian Congo killing fields of King Leopold and the massacres in the Philippines by U.S. troops in the early days of its imperialist expansion to the first concentration camps, created by the Spanish in Cuba and a little later used by the British in South Africa in the Boer War, to Japanese imperialist atrocities in China and Nazi Germany's Holocaust, imperialism has created a world in constant, cruel convulsions."

Only when the system of capitalism is destroyed root and branch through victorious workers revolutions internationally will humanity be rid of such horrors. We look to the model of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, which overthrew capitalism in one-sixth of the globe and became a beacon for the struggles of workers in the advanced capitalist countries and toilers in the colonial and neocolonial world. The fight to smash U.S. imperialism, the most dangerous force of reaction on the planet, requires building a revolutionary workers party independent of all capitalist parties and dedicated to the establishment of working-class rule. ■

The Liberating Goals of Communism

TROTSKY

LENIN

In 1991-92, the Soviet Union, weakened by decades of Stalinist bureaucratic misrule, was destroyed by capitalist counterrevolution—a world-historic defeat for the proletariat. In the name of building "socialism in one country," J.V. Stalin and his heirs in the Kremlin had trampled the liberating goals of Marxism in the mud. The 1938 founding document of the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party explained that an egalitarian, stateless and harmonious society can be achieved only through international proletarian revolution.

With the provision of material abundance through planned socialist production, and the great educational and cultural advances thereby made possible, the socially useless and parasitic classes, as well as the remnants of capitalist ideology, will be eliminated. The entire population will be transformed into a community of free producers owning and controlling the total productive wealth and resources of society, and freely and consciously working out their own destiny. The need for the coercion and repression of socially alien classes will disappear with the disappearance of these classes, and together with them, of all classes. With it will vanish the need for a state machinery—even for the workers' state. The state as an institution for the domination, repression, and coercion of men will be replaced by a purely technical administration for the handling of the general business of society. The noblest objective of the human race—communism, the classless socialist society—inaugurating a new era for all of mankind, will be realized.

The working class can build a complete socialist society only on the basis of a world division of labor and resources, and world cooperation. The revolutionary party in this country does not aim merely to lead the working class of the United States in revolution, but to unite with the workers of all other countries in the international revolution and the establishment of world socialism. Modern forces of production have compelled capitalism itself to transcend national boundaries; and the conflict between the world economy of capitalism and the outlived, constricting national political boundaries is a major source of the disastrous evils which confront the modern world. Capitalist imperialism cannot, however, achieve a harmonious society. World socialism is the only solution for the conflicts and disorders of the modern world, as well as for the major conflicts within a single nation. A socialist society will rationally and scientifically utilize the natural resources and productive machinery of the earth in the interests of the people of the earth, and will solve the conflict between the efficient development of productive forces and the artificial restrictions of national boundaries. It will grant the rights of free cultural self-determination to all nations. In these ways, world socialism will remove the causes of international wars, which under capitalism now seriously threaten to send mankind back into barbarism or complete destruction.

—"Declaration of Principles" (1938), reprinted in *The Founding of the Socialist Workers Party* (1982)

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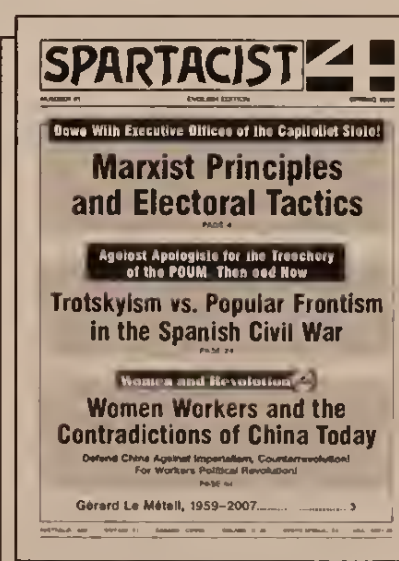

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The following article is reprinted from Workers Hammer *No. 210 (Spring 2010), newspaper of the Spartacist League/ Britain, section of the International Communist League. The Militant tendency is the forerunner of Peter Taaffe's Socialist Party in Britain, affiliated with Socialist Alternative in the U.S., and the late Ted Grant's Socialist Appeal, whose U.S. supporters are the Workers International League.*

WORKERS HAMMER

British Reformists in Action

When Militant Ran Liverpool

Dave Sinclair

Tony Mulhearn (far left) and Derek Hatton (center), members of Militant group who ran Liverpool City Council in 1980s, with Liverpool Labour Group leader John Hamilton. Book by Peter Taaffe and Mulhearn eulogizes this sordid chapter.

The Fifth Conference of the International Communist League (ICL) in 2007 adopted the position of opposition in principle to Marxists running for executive office in the capitalist state. Such offices include president, mayor, provincial or state governor as well as cabinet member in Britain. As we noted:

> "Communist deputies can, *as oppositionists*, serve in the U.S. Congress, parliaments and other legislative bodies as revolutionary tribunes of the working class. But assuming executive office or gaining control of a bourgeois legislature or municipal council, either independently or in coalition, requires taking responsibility for the administration of the machinery of the capitalist state. The ICL had previously held that communists could run for executive offices, provided that we declare in advance that we don't intend to assume such offices. But in re-examining this question, we concluded that standing for election to executive positions carries the implication that one is ready to accept such responsibility, no matter what disclaimer one makes in advance. For self-proclaimed Marxists to engage in such activity only lends legitimacy to prevailing and reformist conceptions of the state."
>
> —"Down With Executive Offices of the Capitalist State! Marxist Principles and Electoral Tactics," *Spartacist* [English edition] No. 61, Spring 2009

When Marxists run candidates and seek election to bourgeois parliaments it is in order to use them as a platform for furthering the goal of proletarian socialist revolution. In the face of the betrayal of the Social Democratic leaders in Germany at the outset of World War I, Karl Liebknecht used his position in parliament to urge the German proletariat to wage revolutionary class struggle against the German bourgeoisie. As Liebknecht put it in his famous rallying cry: "the main enemy is at home." The Bolshevik Party carried out revolutionary agitation and propaganda work, even in the reactionary tsarist Duma.

Assuming executive office, however, means becoming responsible for administering the capitalist system of oppression and exploitation of the working class. The London mayor is the boss of the city's Tube [subway] workers, for example, which means carrying out attacks on their wages and conditions. As an example of why communists don't run for or take executive office, this article will look at the experience of Liverpool City Council from 1983-87, when the deeply Labourite Militant tendency, forerunner of today's Socialist Party and Socialist Appeal, gained control of the council and administered the bourgeois state at the municipal level.

The Communist International and the Struggle Against Reformism

Our opposition to executive offices flows from the Marxist understanding that the state is not neutral but an organ of class rule. At its core the state consists of armed bodies of men and instruments of coercion—the police, the army, prison officers, the courts, etc.—committed to the defence of the prevailing property forms. In every struggle of the working class the attitude that one takes towards the state is critical. The fundamental counterposition is between the reformist strategy of taking hold of and administering the bourgeois state apparatus and the revolutionaries' insistence on the need to smash the existing state and replace it with organs of proletarian rule.

Opposition to executive office is a corollary of Lenin's *The State and Revolution* and *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, written in 1917 and 1918 respectively. In effect, these are founding documents of Lenin's struggle to forge a new, revolutionary international following the collapse of the Second (Socialist) International into social chauvinism at the outbreak of WWI in August 1914. With their support for their "own" bourgeoisies many of the official Socialist leaders passed over definitively to the defence of the capitalist order against the working class. In rescuing the revolutionary heritage of Marxism from the reformist betrayers of the proletariat, Lenin had to reassert the fundamental lesson that Marx and Engels drew from the experience of the Paris Commune of 1871, which was, as Marx wrote in *The Civil War in France*, that: "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes." The experience of the Commune enabled Marx and Engels to codify the revolutionary tasks of the proletariat vis-à-vis the bourgeois state.

The question of ministerialism—the participation of Socialists in bourgeois governments—had been the subject of a major dispute in the Marxist movement as early as 1899, over what became known as Millerandism. The French Socialist leader Alexandre Millerand joined the government of René Waldeck-Rousseau in order to help defuse the deep social crisis that had been raging over the Dreyfus affair. The anti-Semitic witch hunt of this Jewish military officer had polarised the country. Millerand's entry into the government as minister of commerce was a betrayal which divided French Socialists.

Rosa Luxemburg, the Polish-Jewish revolutionary who played a central role in the struggle against this reformist rot and against ministerialism, wrote: "The entry of a socialist into a bourgeois government is not, as it is thought, a partial conquest of the bourgeois state by the socialists, but a partial conquest of the socialist party by the bourgeois state" ("The Dreyfus Affair and the Millerand Case," 1899). But the Second International compromised on the key question of socialists entering bourgeois governments. A resolution cooked up by Karl Kautsky proclaimed:

> "The entry of an individual socialist into a bourgeois ministry cannot be regarded as the normal beginning of the conquest of political power but can be only a temporary and exceptional makeshift in a predicament.
>
> "Whether in a given case such a predicament exists is a question of tactics and not of principle. Here the Congress shouldn't decide. But in any case this dangerous experiment can be advantageous only if it is approved by a united party organization and the socialist minister is and remains the mandate-bearer of his party."
>
> —*Internationaler Sozialisten-Kongress zu Paris 1900* [*International Socialist Congress in Paris 1900*] (Berlin: Expedition der Buchhandlung Vorwärts, 1900) (our translation)

The ICL stands on the resolutions of the first four Congresses of the Communist International (CI), which began the task of clearing out the Augean stables of Social Democratic betrayal and mainly did a good job of reaffirming Marxism on the question of the state. However, we think that the task was not fully completed and we are not uncritical of the CI during this period. In fact our position that communists should not run for executive office is an extension of our criticism of the entry of the German Communist Party (KPD) in October 1923 into the regional governments of Saxony and Thuringia, which were led by so-called "left" Social Democrats. This was a move which helped derail a revolutionary situation (see "A Trotskyist Critique of Germany 1923 and the Comintern," *Spartacist* [English edition] No. 56, Spring 2001).

At its Fourth Congress in 1922, the CI incorrectly applied the term "workers government" to the *bourgeois* governments of Saxony and Thuringia. We understand "workers government" as a popular designation for the dictatorship of the proletariat that follows the smashing of the bourgeois state. In Germany in 1923 the capitalist state was still intact and KPD participation in these governments reinforced prevailing parliamentary prejudices and acted as an obstacle to revolution.

Comintern Ambiguity on Municipalism

An example of unfinished business of the CI on the capitalist state was seen in the "Theses on the Communist Parties and Parliamentarism" at the Second Congress of the Comintern in 1920. The theses make clear that:

> "The proletariat's task is to break up the bourgeoisie's state machine and to destroy it, and with it parliamentary institutions, whether republican or constitutional-monarchist."
>
> —*Proceedings and Documents of the Second Congress, 1920* (Pathfinder, 1991)

Thesis 5 unambiguously states what the reformist left often denies, namely that municipal councils are a component of the bourgeois state apparatus which must be smashed by workers revolution:

> "It is no different with the bourgeoisie's institutions of local government. To counterpose them to the organs of the state is theoretically incorrect. They are in reality organizations similar to the mechanism of the bourgeois state, which must be destroyed by the revolutionary proletariat and replaced by local soviets of workers' deputies."

However another thesis, number 13, which was added as an amendment, contradicts this understanding. It reads:

> "Should Communists hold a majority in institutions of local government, they must (a) organize revolutionary opposition against the central bourgeois government; (b) do everything possible to serve the poorer sectors of the population (economic measures, creating or attempting to create an armed workers' militia, and so forth); (c) at every opportunity point out how the bourgeois state blocks truly major changes; (d) on this basis develop vigorous revolutionary propaganda, never fearing conflict with the state; (e) under certain conditions, replace municipal governments with local workers' councils. In other words, all of the Communists' activity in local government must be a part of the general work of undermining the capitalist system."

While trying to draw a line against municipalism, this point is ambiguous enough that it leaves the door open for opportunism.

continued on page 4

Down With Executive Offices of the Capitalist State!

Liverpool...

(continued from page 3)

For us revolutionaries, it is important to acknowledge the weakness of the early revolutionary CI on municipalism. But unlike the CI, the Militant tendency which ran Liverpool Council had long been a hardened reformist organisation.

The Myth of "Municipal Socialism"

A classic example of opportunist "municipal socialism" is the experience of Poplar Council in the years immediately following WWI. The term "Poplarism" is based on the "Councillors' Revolt" against the central government, which is upheld to this day by reformists of every stripe as an exemplary "socialist" struggle. In the book *Liverpool: A City that Dared to Fight* by Peter Taaffe and Tony Mulhearn (Fortress Books, January 1988), Poplar is cited several times as an inspiration for Militant when it ran Liverpool.

In 1919 the Labour council of Poplar in East London, led by Mayor George Lansbury, began a struggle with the central government, which at that time was a coalition of the Liberals and Tories. Seeking to force richer London boroughs and the central government to assist with poor relief, the Poplar councillors refused to collect rates [taxes] other than those for the immediate benefit of the impoverished people of Poplar. As the post-WWI economy nosedived, unemployment levels were high, including among London's dockers. George Lansbury was a left-Labourite—the Tony Benn of his day—in addition to being a Christian Socialist and a pacifist. Among the Labour councillors elected in Poplar were two Communists, Lansbury's son Edgar and his wife Minnie.

The Poplar Labour councillors acted with considerable courage and were imprisoned for their stubborn campaign on behalf of the poor. However, fundamentally Poplarism revealed the futility of "municipal socialism" to provide any solution to the devastation wrought by the capitalist system of exploitation of the working class. That required workers revolution to rip the means of production out of the hands of the capitalists and a collectivised planned economy in at least a number of advanced capitalist countries. All the Poplar councillors could do was to try to pressure the central authorities to provide money. Noreen Branson recounts in her book *Poplarism, 1919-1925* that councillors hung out a placard when the King and Queen visited the borough stating: "Poplar Borough Council expects this day the King will do his duty by calling upon His Majesty's Government to find work or full maintenance for the unemployed of the nation."

In contrast to the later example of the Militant in Liverpool, which did not oppose British troops in Northern Ireland and was mired in the imperialists' campaign against the Soviet Union, Poplar Council did pass resolutions calling for the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland, as well as opposing British imperialist intervention against the Soviet Union. Poplar councillors were among those who, in 1920, stopped the ship the *Jolly George* from being loaded with munitions bound for Pilsudski's nationalist forces in Poland for use against the Soviet army. The action by London dockers against the *Jolly George* was part of the Hands Off Russia campaign which had been established for working-class action in defence of the fledgling Soviet state against imperialist intervention. (See "'Hands Off Russia!' British Labour and the Wars of Intervention 1918-21," *Spartacist Britain* No. 36, October 1981.)

OGIZ

VEB Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften

Left: Bolshevik Duma fraction exiled to Siberia for opposing World War I, 1915. Right: Karl Liebknecht was imprisoned by German authorities for opposing imperialist war.

Militant's Record in Liverpool

Militant held executive office in Liverpool in the context where Margaret Thatcher's Tory government was waging a savage war against the working class and oppressed minorities. The coal miners were the main target but Thatcher took aim against the whole working class and had a particular disdain for former strongholds of the industrial proletariat such as Liverpool, Manchester and South Yorkshire, as well as Scotland and Wales. The Thatcher government cut the Rate Support Grant (central government funding) to cities like Liverpool, which was devastated by unemployment with the decline of shipbuilding and the docks. Militant had taken office on the basis of a programme of public spending. They refused to increase the rates (local taxes) and put pressure on the government to make up the budget deficit. This is the substance of Militant's much vaunted struggle in Liverpool.

The Militant tendency, led by Ted Grant, was founded in 1964. While falsely purporting to be Trotskyist, they were in fact an organic part of the Labour Party. Contrary to their claim to be winning workers in the Labour Party to Marxism through their "deep entry," it was Militant who took on the political line of the reformist Labour Party, a classic case of the mask becoming the face. Militant's entire political perspective was to bring in "socialism" through gaining a majority in Westminster [Parliament]. The "What We Stand For" box in their newspaper *Militant* shows what this organisation was about. In the 27 May 1983 issue they demand:

> "Nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies, including the banks and insurance companies which control 80-85 per cent of the economy. This should be done through an Enabling Bill, with compensation based only on proven need."

Robin Thompson

Limits of municipalism: Left-Labourite Poplar borough councillors in London's East End fought for minimal raise in welfare payments for poor and unemployed, 1921.

This is parliamentary cretinism—the notion that socialism will come not through workers revolution but via the "mother of all parliaments." Militant infamously upheld the line that cops and prison guards—the armed fist of the capitalist state—are "workers in uniform." This reformist programme is upheld by the Socialist Party today. In August 2007, when thousands of prison officers staged a strike over pay, most of the reformist left gave gushing support to the strike. The Socialist Party went further, inviting Prison Officers' Association (POA) leader Brian Caton to address its "Socialism 2007" event. Grotesquely, Caton is today a member of the Socialist Party.

Characteristically, the Taaffe/Mulhearn book extols the 1919 police strike and the "union" of police and prison officers, which it says "was founded in August 1918 to fight for the interests of 'workers in uniform'." Having described only pages before the savage police assaults against striking railway workers on St. George's Plateau in August 1911, Taaffe/Mulhearn declare:

> "Many workers in Liverpool had indicated that they would come to the side of the police, which showed their sound proletarian instinct. This was despite many vivid memories of the beatings and shooting they had suffered at the hands of the police in 1911."

In 1921 these cops carried out a brutal assault on unemployed workers occupying the Walker Art Gallery in which, as Taaffe/Mulhearn describe it, "workers' blood ran down the steps of the gallery." This confirms the nature of the police as described by Trotsky in an article about Weimar Germany:

> "The fact that the police was originally recruited in large numbers from among Social Democratic workers is absolutely meaningless. Consciousness is determined by environment even in this instance. The worker who becomes a policeman in the service of the capitalist state, is a bourgeois cop, not a worker."
>
> —"What Next? Vital Questions for the German Proletariat," January 1932 (*The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany*)

Labourism and Cold War

Prior to 1983 Liverpool Council was run by the Liberals and Tories, often in coalition. The desperate economic situation however produced a shift and a political vacuum into which Labour, dominated by Militant, was able to move. When Militant assumed office in Liverpool the anti-Soviet Cold War campaign of the imperialists was at its peak over the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan in 1979 and the rise of Polish Solidarność in the early 1980s. The Trotskyist Spartacist League stood forthrightly for the military defence of the Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state, and the deformed workers states of Eastern Europe against imperialism and internal capitalist counterrevolution, while fighting for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies, whose policies of conciliating imperialism undermined that defence. Today, we uphold the same programme in respect of the remaining deformed workers states—China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam. Militant howled along with Thatcher and Reagan in their anti-Communist crusade against the Soviet Union. On 14 October 1982 Militant tendency goons attempted to exclude the Spartacist League from a demonstration in Liverpool against youth unemployment. Incensed by our opposition to counterrevolutionary Solidarność in Poland, after announcing that our banner "had no place on the march" they attempted to tear it down.

At the time the Militant tendency was being witchhunted by the Labour leadership. Under the impact of Reagan and Thatcher's Cold War drive against the Soviet Union the Labour Party was rent by a bitter struggle between the pro-NATO, pro-CIA right wing, led by Denis Healey, and the Little England reformists around Tony Benn, whose opposition to the siting of American missiles in Britain threatened to make Labour unfit for government in the eyes of the British bourgeoisie. We defended the Militant tendency against Labour's inquisitors, while noting:

> "Just as Healey is proving Labour's loyalty to the bourgeoisie by witchhunting Militant, so Militant tries by witchhunting the SL to prove its loyalty to anti-Soviet Labourism and its determination to get Labour into Parliament (with or without 'socialist policies') above all else."
>
> —"Witchhunted Witchhunt," *Spartacist Britain* No. 45, November 1982

Like Benn, Militant truly believed that the Labour Party was a "broad church" which should function as a "party of the whole class." We sought to exacerbate this split in the Labour Party by driving out the pro-CIA Healey wing, to place Benn in a position where his reformist politics could be exposed as a central obstacle to building a revolutionary party.

Workers Hammer

Spartacist banners at 14 October 1982 demonstration in Liverpool against youth unemployment drove Militant bureaucrats into frenzy.

Among our slogans that enraged Militant were "Kick out CIA/NATO-lover Healey!" and "Labour can betray without the CIA connection!" More than a decade later, following the defeat of the miners and counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, Tony Blair began the project of seeking to transform the Labour Party from a "bourgeois workers party"—having a mass working-class base, but saddled with a pro-capitalist leadership and programme—into an outright bourgeois party, by severing all links to the trade-union movement. This process is unfinished but Labour is now moribund as a reformist party of the working class.

Stefano Cagnoni/Report

November 1984: Mass picket of miners and transport workers.. TUC/Labour leadership spiked joint class struggle, leaving miners to fight alone against massive state repression.

Militant and the Miners Strike

Peter Taaffe, today's Socialist Party leader who was a leader of the Militant tendency with the late Ted Grant, equates Militant's stewardship of Liverpool Council with the heroic year-long miners strike of 1984-85. The first paragraph of the preface to Taaffe and Mulhearn's book says:

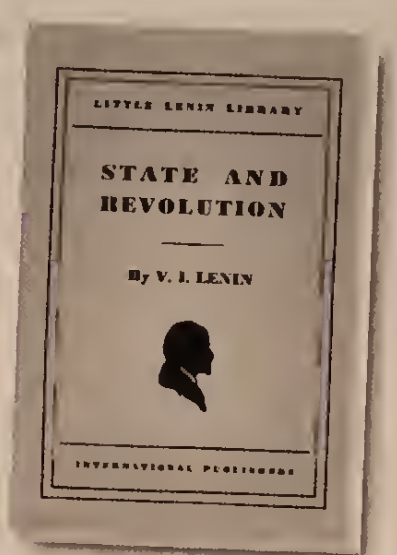
> "Since 1979 the conditions and rights of working people appear to have been crushed by the Thatcher juggernaut. In reality, the working class has put up ferocious opposition to the Tory government. This reached its height in the titanic year-long miners' strike of 1984-5 and in the stand of the Liverpool City Council between 1983-7."

Ludicrously placing the most significant class struggle in Britain since the 1926 General Strike on the same plane as Militant's pleading with Thatcher for more money for Liverpool shows Taaffe's miserable parliamentary cretinism. Although the book is 500 pages long there are only a few passing references to the miners strike. Thatcher deployed the full weight of the capitalist state—thousands of riot cops, MI5 spies, court sequestrators, etc.—against the NUM [National Union of Mineworkers], which was dubbed the "enemy within." As Taaffe/Mulhearn acknowledge: "the miners' strike had to be 'seen off' and this was not to take place until March 1985." Thus, in July 1984, four months into the miners strike, Thatcher's minister Patrick Jenkin made a deal with the Militant-led council whereby the Tory government in Westminster would give Liverpool Council £30 million in exchange for a rates rise of 17 per cent. In his book *Inside Left: The Story So Far*, published in 1988, former Militant deputy council leader Derek Hatton recounts being told by Tory MP [Member of Parliament] Teddy Taylor that "we had to tell Patrick to give you the money. At this stage we want [miners union leader Arthur] Scargill. He's our priority. But we'll come for you later."

We called for spreading the miners strike to other strategic industries, particularly the railways and the docks, which would have shut down the country. This would have immediately raised the question of state power, of which class shall rule. Taaffe/Mulhearn say that: "Like other councils, Liverpool City Council was heavily involved in support for the miners" and cite the facilities provided by the council "for collecting cash to buy food which was delivered to the mining areas by the lorry-load." But Militant's perspective was above all to get a Labour government elected. The Labour Party at that time was led by Neil Kinnock, who was despised by militant miners, especially for his denunciations of the strikers as "violent" while they were under massive police assault. Kinnock infuriated the miners not least with his call for a ballot, which became the rallying cry of all those who sought to defeat the strike, including Thatcher and the TUC [Trades Union Congress] misleaders, and was echoed by much of the so-called "far left." Not surprisingly, in their book, Taaffe and Mulhearn repeat this strike-breaking call, stating:

> "Yet as Militant has consistently pointed out, one of the fundamental weaknesses of the miners' strike was the failure of the leadership to hold a ballot which would have resulted in an overwhelming majority confirming the strike action which was in progress. The idea that the actions of a 'determined minority' can bulldoze other workers to come out on strike without discussion and a democratic vote is absolutely false."

B.D. Vigilev



Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin's 1917 *The State and Revolution* explains Marxist understanding of state as instrument of class rule.

Militant/Socialist Party: Labourite Social Chauvinism

As a city, Liverpool was built on the slave trade. The City Hall from which Militant conducted their business is decorated with stone representations of slavery; city streets are named after those who got very rich in the trafficking of black human flesh, including numerous mayors of the city such as Foster Cunliffe, Joseph Bird and George Campbell.

In 1981, rampant police brutality against minority youth sparked riots in Toxteth [in Liverpool]. As we wrote in *Workers Hammer* No. 109 (September 1989):

> "Unemployment in the heavily black Toxteth area can reach up to 80 per cent. In some areas, according to another report in the *Independent* (15 October 1988) unemployment among black youth is as high as 90 per cent. 'Nowhere else in Britain are blacks so exposed to threats, taunts, and abuse if they leave an area of the city' (*Guardian*, 19 July)."

A Marxist revolutionary should strive to be, in Lenin's words, "not a trade union secretary but a tribune of the people." In other words, we fight against all manifestations of oppression in capitalist society and seek to lead the multiethnic working class in a struggle against racism in all its forms, against women's oppression, against the oppression of homosexuals, etc. The Militant tendency is a far cry from a "tribune of the people."

A furious row developed when Sampson Bond, a Militant supporter from London, was appointed as Principal Race Relations Advisor to the Liverpool Council. Taaffe/Mulhearn claim:

> "Two entirely different philosophies, reflecting diametrically opposed class forces, clashed on the issue of his appointment as Principal Race Relations Officer to the Liverpool City Council. On the one side stood the class conscious approach of the labour movement. On the other side stood the race relations industry, feeling threatened to the very marrow of their being by the appointment of just one Marxist to such a potentially important position."

Militant's so-called "class conscious approach" was nothing other than Labourite chauvinist indifference to special oppression. In *Inside Left* Derek Hatton states that Militant's position "has always been that while accepting there is discrimination, the problems of the black community are part of the overall struggle. It is a class problem, and a Socialist problem, and must be solved within that wide framework." He continues, "To do otherwise is to alienate many white working-class people from identifying with the struggle."

Hatton's fear of "alienating white working-class people" is an expression of Militant's pandering to backward consciousness, including racism. Their indifference to racial oppression is of a piece with their refusal to call for British troops out of Northern Ireland and their refusal to defend the Catholic population against national oppression at the hands of the British imperialists and the Orange state. This crass Labourite social chauvinism is exemplified by an article in the 6 January 1984 *Militant* titled "Northern Ireland: Labour Must Combat Sectarianism." Militant says, "the Labour Party in Britain can and must play a significant part in helping Northern Irish workers come together in common struggle for socialist change." This is the same pro-imperialist Labour Party which led the cheering in Parliament at the execution of James Connolly; which sent British troops into Northern Ireland in 1969 and which introduced the first draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act in 1974. Of course Militant's leaders are past masters at disguising their Labourite opportunism in the language of pseudo-Marxism, claiming that they're fighting for "working-class unity."

Once the Thatcher government had defeated the miners—who were betrayed by the misleaders of the working class—Thatcher turned her attention to Liverpool. The city councillors were made personally liable for the refusal to set a rate. A total of 47 councillors were surcharged [charged a penalty], while the council tried to raise money from the Swiss banks. But in the meantime, with the money running out in a matter of weeks, Militant famously issued redundancy [layoff] notices to the council workers. As described by Taaffe/Mulhearn:

> "The Labour group decided on the 'tactic' of issuing 90-day redundancy notices to the 30,000 strong workforce to gain that period as a breathing space in order to build the campaign. It was absurd to suggest, as the press and to their shame the national trade-union leaders subsequently did, that 30,000 workers were to be sacked."

They conclude, however, that "the issuing of 'redundancy notices' turned out to be a major tactical error." Derek Hatton, in *Inside Left*, unwittingly captures the miserable spectacle of self-proclaimed "Marxists" administering capitalism against the workers:

> "We argued, that by issuing redundancy notices we could also hammer home the sharp reality of our arguments: that unless more money was available to Liverpool from the central funds then jobs really were on the line. There was never ever any intention to implement a single one of those 31,000 redundancy notices."

Not surprisingly, Militant's redundancy "tactic" was bitterly opposed by the unions. Hatton bleats: "Now we were their employers, and they fought us bitterly every inch of the way. We had told them that the redundancy notices were only a tactical ploy, but they sold the idea to their members as though it was for real. 'Should we let our employers sack us—or should we stand and fight them now?' was the line they took." That is the end result of running the local state in the first place, which means becoming the bosses.

The Labour councillors were surcharged and banned from office by the courts. Militant were rewarded for their decades of loyalty to the Labour Party by being expelled by the Neil Kinnock leadership. The response of Militant to the witch hunt is explained in an appendix to the Taaffe/Mulhearn book: "When faced with expulsion proceedings in 1982, *Militant*'s Editorial Board decided to challenge the NEC's [National Executive Committee] unconstitutional and undemocratic move in the courts." Use of the bourgeois courts against political opponents in the trade unions or the workers movement is a breach of the principle of proletarian independence and an attack on the labour movement's strength. Inviting the class enemy to intervene in the internal affairs of the labour movement is to promote illusions in bourgeois democracy by portraying the state as "neutral" between classes. That is the very essence of Militant's Labourite reformism.

What was the result of Militant's proud record in Liverpool? They boast that the Labour vote in 1987 was higher in Liverpool than the national average and much higher than it had been in 1983. In other words, if only that swing had been reflected nationally we would have had...a Kinnock-led Labour government! That's what you get with "socialists" holding executive office and administering the capitalist state. In its own way it's a powerful argument for why you need a workers revolution. ■

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For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

The Cold War and the Civil Rights Movement

We print below the second and final part of a Black History Month Forum given in New York City on February 20 by Workers Vanguard *Editorial Board member Paul Cone. Part One appeared in* WV *No. 956 (9 April).*

The Democratic Party's dominance in national politics was based on the New Deal coalition of Northern liberals and Southern segregationists. Throughout the Great Depression and World War II, Franklin D. Roosevelt refused to endorse anti-lynching legislation and the desegrega-

PART TWO

tion of the armed forces. Many of his New Deal programs—including Social Security—largely excluded the bulk of the black population in the South. Maintaining this New Deal coalition was a paramount concern for the Democratic Party establishment, up to and including John F. Kennedy in the early 1960s.

But in 1948, President Harry S. Truman adopted a mild civil rights platform at that year's Democratic Party Convention. Truman was motivated by the Democrats' Cold War foreign relations concerns, as well as the need to prevent a hemorrhaging of liberal votes to Henry Wallace's Progressive Party in that year's presidential election. Wallace, who had been Roosevelt's vice president from 1941-45 and then Secretary of Commerce, ran for president on the bourgeois Progressive Party ticket on a platform that called for peaceful negotiations with the Soviet Union, repeal of Jim Crow laws and legal guarantees of civil rights. Wallace was supported by the Stalinist Communist Party (CP).

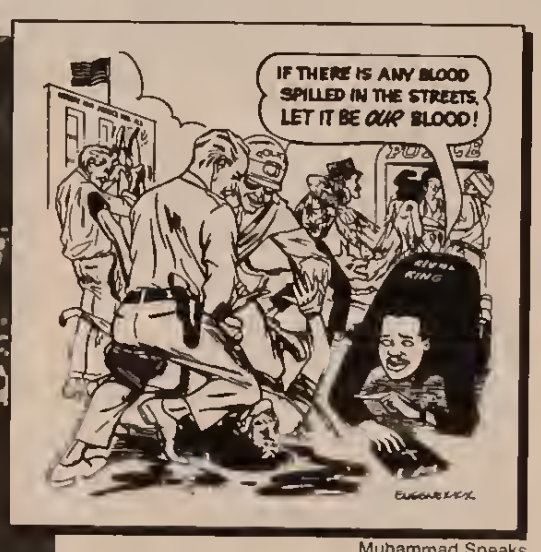
AP

Civil rights protesters attacked by cops in Birmingham, Alabama, May 1963.

Hubert Humphrey's speech at the 1948 Democratic Convention marked his national emergence as a liberal icon. He went on to become one of Washington's most virulent anti-Communist witchhunters. Humphrey sponsored the 1954 Communist Control Act outlawing the CP and proposed to amend the 1950 McCarran Act to set up concentration camps for "subversives" in the U.S.

When Truman won the Democratic presidential nomination, a significant number of Southerners fled the Democrats to form the States Rights Party and nominated South Carolina governor Strom Thurmond for president. (The Democrats had been the racist South's historic party well before Abraham Lincoln, a Republican, won the 1860 presidential election on a platform opposing the extension of slavery.) With the help of the black vote in Northern urban centers, Truman squeaked out an upset victory. For the most part, the Southern Dixiecrats remained a core part of the Democratic Party until the mid 1960s.

Wayne State University



Muhammad Speaks

Cops invade Detroit ghetto during 1967 upheaval. Cartoon captures cringing pacifism of Martin Luther King, who supported suppression of 1960s ghetto explosions.

While Thurmond was trying to lead the South out of the Democratic Party, the social democrats, liberal labor tops and the CP adopted the strategy of "realignment"—i.e., driving the Dixiecrats from the party and pressuring the Democrats to fight for black rights. The social democrats were also actively trying to drive the reds out of the unions. Some of these social democrats, such as Bayard Rustin, A. Philip Randolph and, later, Michael Harrington, would be long-time advisers to Martin Luther King.

Defending the strategy of "realignment," UAW president Walter Reuther declared, "We felt that instead of trying to create a third party—a labor party:... that we ought to bring about a realignment and get the liberal forces in one party and the conservatives in another" (quoted in David Brody, *Workers in Industrial America: Essays in the Twentieth Century Struggle*). *Labor Action*, published by Max Shachtman—who had split with Trotskyism on the eve of the Second World War because he refused to defend the Soviet Union against imperialism—declared in 1956: "The indicated strategy for labor in the coming Democratic Convention is: oust the South from the Democratic party through an all-out struggle for civil rights." This article was written by left Shachtmanite Hal Draper, whose Independent Socialist Clubs, founded in 1964, were the precursor to the International Socialist Organization (ISO).

Years later, responding to the Black Power advocates in late 1966, Rustin stated, "The winning of the right of Negroes to vote in the South insures the eventual transformation of the Democratic Party.... The Negro vote will eliminate the Dixiecrats from the party and from Congress...." Rustin called for "a liberal-labor-civil rights coalition which would work to make the Democratic party truly responsive to the aspirations of the poor" (*Commentary*, September 1966). Meanwhile, the CP's Claude Lightfoot argued, "ousting the Dixiecrats from the halls of Congress" will "lay the basis for building a broad and pro-democratic and anti-monopoly coalition" (*Turning Point in Freedom Road: The Fight to End Jim Crow Now* [1962]).

The program of building "unity" with progressive capitalists in an "anti-monopoly" coalition and both working within and pushing from outside to make the Democrats fight remain the hallmark of American reformism.

In the early years of the civil rights movement in the 1950s, the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) insisted on the need for an independent labor party in the fight for black and workers rights. American Trotskyist leader Richard S. Fraser argued against "realignment" reformism: "The differences within the leadership of the Southern Democratic Party are tactical ones of how best to protect white supremacy." Fraser recognized the revolutionary implications of the fight for black freedom:

> "It is the Negro movement which at the present moment holds the key to the whole picture. If the Negroes should succeed in breaking away from the Democratic Party, large sections of the industrial working class in decisive sections of the country would be impelled to do likewise. The result would be the disintegration of the Democratic Party in its strategic Northern centers and its replacement by independent labor political action."
>
> —"Why Support for the Democrats by Reuther and the CP Helps Preserve White Supremacy," *Militant*, 24 September 1956

Ultimately, the Democratic Party *did* get "realigned." But not in the way the social democrats foresaw. Passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act by the Johnson administration would lead to a massive flight of Southern whites to the Republicans—the realization of the Southern strategy first devised by Barry Goldwater in the 1964 presidential election and implemented successfully by Richard Nixon in the 1968 election. The Democrats have won barely any Southern states in national elections since. And as the Democrats spent the next 32 years pandering to that white racist vote, the reformists only deepened their commitment to "fighting the right" through the Democratic Party.

Post-World War II Struggles

The United States emerged from World War II as the pre-eminent imperialist power. Its European capitalist rivals were in tatters, and several of them were discredited and reviled by large sectors of the working masses for their identification with the fascists. Colonial empires were dissolving. Independence movements in turn were inspiring black activists in this country, as would the revolutionary overturns of capitalism in countries like China and Cuba.

Wartime employment and organization into CIO unions

Break with the Democrats!
For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

provided tremendous advances for black people. At the same time, black veterans returned to a wave of lynchings and race terror North and South. These black workers would form the core of the early civil rights movement—for example, the NAACP grew ninefold between 1940 and 1946.

In posturing as the shining defender of "freedom" and "democracy," Washington had a distinct handicap. Despite the devastation and the loss of 27 million people during the war, the Soviet bureaucratically degenerated workers state emerged with tremendous international prestige—a military power that had liberated Europe from Nazi Germany, and a rising industrial power as well. The Soviets provided support for national liberation movements in Africa. The U.S. was widely detested as an ally of the British, French and other European colonial powers. The postwar Marshall Plan to rebuild West Europe as a bulwark against the Soviets also played a key role in preserving the colonial empires of U.S. allies—for a time. When the French African colony of Guinea voted for independence in 1958, the U.S. supported France's retaliations and refused to recognize Sékou Touré's government. In 1960, the U.S. opposed a United Nations resolution condemning Portugal for forced labor and brutality in its African colonies, and another censuring South Africa for its apartheid policies.

Following the 1960 Sharpeville massacre in South Africa, in which 69 black activists were killed for protesting the hated apartheid pass laws, President Eisenhower waxed on about his concerns for the white South Africans and what he called their "difficult social and political problem." The Congo won its independence from Belgium that same year and within months Eisenhower resolved to remove its nationalist prime minister Patrice Lumumba, authorizing the CIA to try to eliminate him. Lumumba was executed in early 1961, with U.S., Belgian and UN complicity. During the Kennedy administration the CIA worked closely with South African security forces, in 1962 tipping them off to African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela's whereabouts, which led to his arrest and 27-year imprisonment.

But the biggest public relations problem for the U.S. rulers was the horrific treatment of black people within their own borders. This was well known to workers, students, guerrilla leaders and government officials from Bombay to Lagos. Even U.S. imperialism's closest allies recognized the dilemma. In 1947, at the height of the Greek Civil War, with the U.S. pouring military aid to the brutal right-wing forces, Helen Vlachos, writer for the conservative Greek newspaper *Kathimerini*, traveled to the American South. She related how, after her trip, she could better understand "the bitter answer of a small Negro boy who, when asked by his teacher what punishment he would impose upon Adolf Hitler, said, 'I would paint his face black and send him to America immediately'" (Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights* [2000]).

The opening verbal shot of the Cold War was British prime minister Winston Churchill's famous 1946 Fulton, Missouri, speech. I say "verbal shot" because the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were the first real shots. Over 200,000 Japanese people were sent to a fiery death out of racist spite and with the purpose of intimidating the Soviet Union. Churchill, speaking at the segregated Westminster College in Truman's home state of Missouri, declared that "an iron curtain has descended across the continent." Churchill stated, "We must never cease to proclaim in fearless tones the great principles of freedom and the rights of man which are the joint inheritance of the English-speaking world and which through Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights, the Habeas Corpus, trial by jury, and the English common law find their most famous expression in the American Declaration of Independence." Needless to say, none of these applied to black people in the South. The NAACP, the leading civil rights organization of the day, blasted Churchill's speech: "It would virtually insure continuation of imperialism.... Great Britain's policies toward colonial peoples which have been continued by the present labor government can cause only shudders of apprehension as far as Churchill's proposal of an Anglo-American coalition is concerned" (quoted in Gerald Horne, *Black and Red* [1986]). The NAACP would soon sing a different tune.

AP

June 1958: Black leaders lobby White House following suspension of school integration in Little Rock, Arkansas. From left: Martin Luther King, White House administrator E. Frederic Morrow, President Dwight Eisenhower, A. Philip Randolph, Attorney General William Rogers and NAACP leader Roy Wilkins.

The State Department's international propaganda efforts had a sort of Joseph Goebbels quality. On one hand, the government prevented black critics from traveling abroad. Most prominent among them was the actor Paul Robeson, a supporter of the CP, whose passport was seized. The State Department also prevented unfavorable books from being stocked in its libraries overseas. At the same time, the United States Information Agency distributed pamphlets abroad, such as *The Negro in American Life*, that depicted ever-increasing harmony in race relations. This pamphlet boasted of how equality was slowly "nurtured" as compared to post-Civil War Reconstruction's "authoritarian measures" that had sought to impose equality for the newly freed black slaves in the South.

The State Department sponsored tours of black public figures to back up the lies. Whenever called upon, NAACP executive secretary Walter White would fly overseas to sing the praises of U.S. race relations. Jazz great Dizzy Gillespie toured Africa for the State Department, as basketball star Bill Russell did in 1959. New York Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, who had earlier been elected with CP support, told the 1955 Bandung Conference of "non-aligned states" that his presence gave "living proof to the fact that there is no truth in the Communist charge that the Negro is oppressed in America" (quoted in Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*). Ultimately, Powell's "reward" for this service was to be stripped of his Congressional seat in the 1960s. Wilson Record's 1951 book, *Race and Radicalism, The Negro and the Communist Party in Conflict*, was used by the U.S. in Asia and Africa. Promoting Record's anti-Communist work, Voice of America broadcasts proclaimed, "This is the real American Negro as he is described by the distinguished Negro sociologist Wilson Record." Wilson Record was a white man, from Texas.

A number of civil rights leaders joined in the State Department's efforts. A. Philip Randolph declared his support of the Fair Employment Practices Commission in 1948. He said: "The most powerful political propaganda weapon Russian Communism now holds in its hands is discrimination against Negroes" (quoted in Martha Biondi, *To Stand and Fight* [2003]). Speaking at the 50th anniversary of the NAACP's founding, Walter Reuther warned that segregation "can be American democracy's achilles heel in Asia and Africa where the great millions of the human family lives" (quoted in Horne, *Black and Red*). In 1958, after a federal court judge ordered a moratorium on school desegregation for a couple of years, Martin Luther King, Randolph, the NAACP's Roy Wilkins and others joined in a letter of protest to Eisenhower, declaring, "In our world-wide struggle to strengthen the free world against the spread of totalitarianism, we are sabotaged by the totalitarian practices forced upon millions of our Negro citizens" (quoted in Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*).

In 1949, when Randolph declared blacks would and should fight in a war against the Soviet Union, the SWP's *Militant* (26 December 1949) powerfully answered:

> "By this answer he gives a go-ahead signal to the very same ruling class that is responsible for the oppression and segregation of the Negro people at home—for a war that will be a projection on the international field of the same reactionary policies that they are pursuing in the United States.... Not only the Soviet masses but American workers and Negroes have a stake in preserving this system, for its destruction in a war by U.S. imperialism would mean a new lease on life for dying world capitalism. The strengthening of capitalism in turn would mean the strengthening of all its institutions, including the institution of Jim Crow which Negroes are fighting to end."

The Cold War Attacks on Labor

The year 1946 saw the largest strike wave in U.S. history, followed by an anti-Communist purge of the unions. Key in this purge was Walter Reuther of the United Auto Workers (UAW). At the same time, the imperialists, led by the Democratic Truman administration, launched the Cold War against the Soviet Union.

As early as 1947, Truman put in place a loyalty board to screen all government employees and the purge of left-wing militants from the CIO began. That same year Congress enacted the strikebreaking Taft-Hartley Act. In addition to outlawing such labor weapons as secondary strikes, it barred Communists from union office. The anti-Communist witchhunt was launched to regiment the "home front," to break the back of the militancy of the industrial unions that had been organized in the 1930s.

Some 25,000 union members, many of them key leaders of the CIO organizing drives, were purged from the labor movement, in some cases leading to the destruction of whole unions. Shachtman's Independent Socialist League supported the expulsions of the CP-led unions from the CIO. The anti-red purge installed a venal, pro-imperialist union leadership that abetted the bosses in fostering racial divisions and would preside over the decimation of the unions in coming decades.

In the South, the red purge drove from the unions a militant generation of working-class fighters for black rights. Ironically, this took place against the backdrop of "Operation Dixie," the CIO campaign to organize the South. As the experience of the 1930s had shown, this would require combining the fight for unionization with the struggle against Jim Crow. This was anathema to the CIO tops, whose Democratic Party loyalties ruled out any effort that would affront the Dixiecrats.

The anti-Communist purge targeted just about anyone seen as fighting for black rights. This in turn also levied a heavy toll on the unions. Among the questions asked of Dorothy Bailey, a black U.S. Employment Service employee, to "prove" supposed Communist sympathies, was: "Did you ever write a letter to the Red Cross about the segregation of blood?" (quoted in Biondi, *To Stand and Fight*). She was fired from her job. Black workers were asked, "Have you ever had dinner with a mixed group? Have you ever danced with a white girl?" White workers were asked if they ever entertained blacks in their home. Witnesses before the witch-hunting commissions were asked, "Have you had any conversations that would lead you to believe [the accused] is rather advanced in his thinking on racial matters?" (Philip S. Foner, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker, 1619-1973* [1974]).

Under the 1950 Port Security Act (a precursor to the Maritime Security Act adopted a few years back as part of the "war on terrorism"), 50-70 percent of sailors and longshoremen dismissed were black or foreign-born. Purgings of black postal workers by the loyalty board were upheld by the Supreme Court.

In Birmingham, Alabama, the South's one truly industrial center and accordingly a center of black—and white—proletarian power, there is a long history of investigations into the connections between blacks and reds. By the end of 1956, Virginia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina and Mississippi had adopted laws and launched investigations to harass the NAACP, while Alabama, Louisiana and Texas banned the organization's activities outright.

In 1948, the U.S. Justice Department indicted leaders and members of the CP under the thought-crime Smith Act. The SWP defended the CP, which had earlier hailed the Smith Act prosecutions of Trotskyists in the early 1940s for their revolutionary opposition to World War II. Even while under attack during the Cold

continued on page 8

Fraser family

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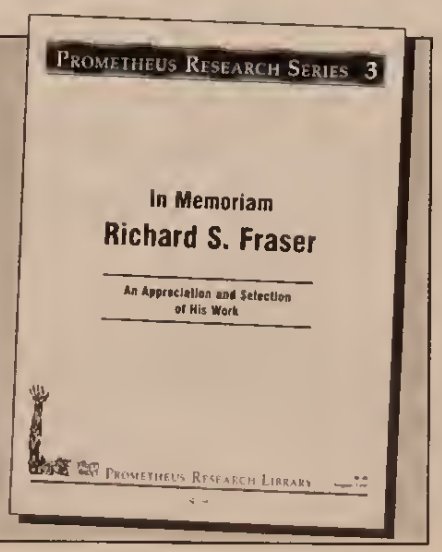

Civil Rights...

(continued from page 7)

War, the Stalinists did their best to poison any united action against the witchhunters. Robeson spit on the SWP's campaign for the "legless veteran" James Kutcher. Kutcher, who had lost both his legs in World War II, was fired in 1948 from his government clerk's job in Newark, New Jersey, because of his SWP membership.

By the late 1940s, in stark contrast to their statement following Churchill's speech, the NAACP had dropped even any verbal opposition to colonialism. They had ousted W.E.B. DuBois, one of the organization's founders, following his support to the Henry Wallace presidential candidacy in the 1948 elections. For the next two decades NAACP head Roy Wilkins and lead counsel Thurgood Marshall, who went on to become the first black justice on the U.S. Supreme Court, shared information about alleged Communists with the FBI. The Harlem Branch of the NAACP had a special "Committee on Subversion."

Tuadying to the forces of racist reaction did little to immunize liberal civil rights leaders from the witchhunters. Ultimately, it only emboldened them. Redbaiting was a common thread throughout the course of the civil rights movement. Despite his pacifism and pro-Democratic Party politics, King was subjected to vicious and degrading FBI surveillance, wiretapping and interference in his personal life. The wiretaps on his phone, as well as on Bayard Rustin's, were authorized by Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy.

The International Context

There is a lot of anecdotal material on the international effects of various events in the civil rights period and how these events caused a great deal of embarrassment for the U.S. imperialist rulers. I want to give just a few examples surrounding some of the landmark events of that time.

The international effects of the civil rights movement were made clear in the Justice Department's intervention into a series of civil rights cases, including the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954, which outlawed segregation in public schools. In the *Brown* case, the government submitted a "friend of the court" brief that quoted Secretary of State Dean Acheson at length: "The United States is under constant attack in the foreign press...because of various practices of discrimination against minority groups in this country." Acheson continued, "As might be expected, Soviet spokesmen regularly exploit this situation in propaganda against the United States, both within the United Nations and through radio broadcasts and the press, which reaches all corners of the world." One young activist of South Africa's African National Congress offered, "I think America has lost African friendship. As far as I am concerned, I will henceforth look East where race discrimination is so taboo that it is made a crime by the state" (quoted in Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line*).

Over the next few years, black students' attempts to attend all-white schools were met with a vicious racist backlash that again reverberated across the world—most famously in the fall of 1957. When nine black students went to enroll in Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, they were met with lynch mob opposition led by the Capital Citizens' Council. The day before school opened, Democratic Party governor Orval Faubus called in 250 National Guardsmen, guns in hand, to keep the black students out. As soldiers blocked the school entrance, a racist mob screamed at 15-year-old Elizabeth Eckford, "Lynch her! Lynch her!" After days of protests, Eisenhower sent in the 101st Airborne Division.

As myth has it, this was to "protect" the black students. The call for federal troops to the South was a defining issue throughout the course of the civil rights movement. We are opposed to such calls on the armed forces of the capitalist state. In an early expression of the SWP's loss of its bearings under the pressure of the Cold War, in October 1955 the party called on the government to send troops to Mississippi to defend blacks. Inside the SWP, Richard S. Fraser objected to the slogan, writing in a March 1956 document, "If we advocate that the Federal Government send them there, we will bear political responsibility for the consummation of the demand." He noted, "The most probable condition under which the Federal Government will send troops to the South will be that the Negroes hold the initiative in the struggle. As long as the white supremacists have the initiative and the lid of repression is clamped on tightly, the social equilibrium is not upset by a lynching or other terrorist actions." Fraser presciently added, "When the Negroes take the initiative it is a 'race riot' and the public security is threatened and an excellent reason is given to the government to intervene" ("Contributiun to the Discussion un the Slogan 'Send Federal Troops to Mississippi'," reprinted in "In Memoriam—Richard S. Fraser: An Appreciation and Selection of His Work," *Prometheus Research Series* No. 3, August 1990).

This was proven to be the case. Eisenhower's troops were sent to put down an upheaval of the Little Rock black population when it fought to disperse the racist mob and defend the students. The troops restored "law and order," preventing the total rout of the retreating racists. In a pattern that would be repeated in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963 and Watts, California, in 1965, King praised the troops for enforcing "nonviolence" among the black population. He sent a telegram to Eisenhower "to express my sincere support for the stand you have taken to restore law and order in Little Rock, Arkansas." He added, "your action has been of great benefit to our nation and to the Christian traditions of fair play and brotherhood" (*The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr., Volume IV: Symbol of the Movement, January 1957-December 1958* [2000]). Eisenhower had earlier conveyed his notion of brotherhood to Supreme Court justice Earl Warren, telling of his empathy for the segregationists: "These are not bad people. All they are concerned about is to see that their sweet little girls are not required to sit alongside some big overgrown Negroes" (quoted in Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*).

Paul Schutzer

Vice President Richard Nixon's car attacked by angry protesters in Venezuela, May 1958.

Little Rock reverberated worldwide. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles complained, "this situation was ruining our foreign policy." Jazz legend Louis Armstrong canceled a propaganda trip to the Soviet Union planned by the State Department. He explained: "The way that they are treating my people in the South, the government can go to hell." When then-vice president Richard Nixon visited Venezuela in 1958 his limousine was stoned by an angry crowd who chanted, "Little Rock! Little Rock!"

Dignitaries from Third World countries wooed by Washington were themselves often denied the use of public facilities and subjected to the same racist humiliation as American blacks were on a daily basis. John Kennedy's secretary of state, Dean Rusk, described one such incident:

> "Early in the Kennedy years a black delegate to the United Nations landed in Miami on his way to New York. When the passengers disembarked for lunch, the white passengers were taken to the airport restaurant; the black delegate received a folding canvas stool in a corner of the hangar and a sandwich wrapped with wax paper. He then flew on to New York, where our delegation asked for his vote on human rights issues."
>
> —quoted in Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*

Having been elected in 1960 with no particular political commitment to civil rights legislation, the administrations of Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson ushered in the 1964 Civil Rights Act. This won John Kennedy and his younger brother, Robert, reputations as champions of black rights. In fact, Kennedy's primary concerns were prosecuting the Cold War against the USSR and keeping the Democratic Party coalition of Northern liberals and Southern Dixiecrats together. Just a few years after Robert Kennedy signed wiretap orders on King's phone, Johnson's attorney general Ramsey Clark would escalate the war against the Black Panthers and other "black extremists." In 1992, Clark went on to found the International Action Center, among whose leading spokesmen are members of the Workers World Party (WWP).

In Birmingham in 1963, the world watched police official Bull Connor and his stormtroopers: police dogs were set loose upon black protesters, while firehoses set at pressures sufficient to strip off tree bark hurled children up against walls. In response, the black masses fought back with sticks, rocks, knives and bottles against the racists in the streets. It was at that moment—and not before—that Kennedy sent troops to bases outside the city and announced he had taken steps to federalize the Alabama National Guard.

In the wake of black self-defense efforts against Klan and cop terror in Birmingham, Kennedy made vague suggestions of civil rights legislation. The 1963 March on Washington was an attempt to channel the mass struggle for black rights into pressure politics for the passing of such a civil rights bill and to cement ties with the Democratic Party. But when Kennedy called the civil rights movements' "representative leaders" into the Oval Office, they quickly changed their minds about seeking to pressure Kennedy, who they saw was dragging his feet. The destination of the march was changed from the White House to the Lincoln Memorial. The march leaders deleted a "statement to the president" and a call to confront Congress from the march handbook. Participation was denied to "subversive" groups and speeches were censored.

Malcolm X rightly condemned the march as a "farce." Overseas it generated substantial goodwill for the administration. But this didn't last very long. The following month the Klan bombed the 6th Avenue Baptist Church in Birmingham, killing four young black girls. When an embassy official invited a Cameroon government representative to a screening of a film on the March on Washington, he was asked, "Don't you have a film of the church dynamiting, too?"

The following year, in 1964, months after Kennedy's assassination, his successor Lyndon Johnson pushed through the Civil Rights Act, formally eliminating segregation in schools and public accommodations. In early 1965, Johnson ordered the first bombing attacks on Vietnam, sparking the initial antiwar protests and again revealing the brutal face of U.S.

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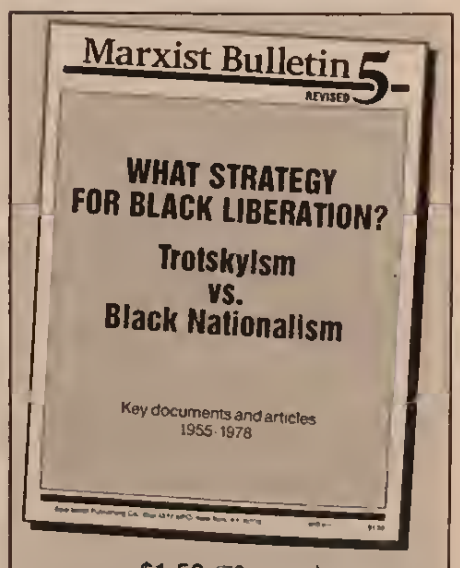

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imperialism around the world. Days after enactment of the Voting Rights Act in 1965, Watts erupted after the arrest of a black motorist, as did ghettos across the country over the next three years, an expression of the frustrated expectations generated by civil rights agitation. These upheavals marked the beginning of the end of the civil rights period.

The End of the Civil Rights Era

After the ghetto upheavals in Harlem and Watts, when it was clear the explosions were part of a pattern and not isolated events, it also became clear that King's "turn the other cheek" ethos had no relevance to the embittered urban black masses. In 1966, Stokely Carmichael, newly elected as chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), raised the demand for "Black Power." This call electrified young radicals from the Jim Crow South to the ghettos of the North. We noted at the time that the Black Power slogan "represents the repudiation of tokenism, liberal tutelage, reliance on the federal government, and the non-violent philosophy of moral suasion. In this sense, therefore, black power is class power, and should be supported by all socialist forces" ("Black Power—Class Power," reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5 [Revised], "What Strategy for Black Liberation? Trotskyism vs. Black Nationalism" [September 1978]). We also warned that "'Black Power' must be clearly defined in *class*, not racial terms, for otherwise the 'black power' movement may become the black wing of the Democratic Party in the South" ("Black and Red—Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom," *Spartacist* supplement, May-June 1967).

Unfortunately, this prognosis was proven to be the case. And not simply in the South. Beginning with Carl Stokes in Cleveland in 1967, black mayors came to be installed in Northern cities to contain the seething discontent of the ghetto masses. Over the years, a layer of black elected officials rose to prominence by cynically selling themselves as agents of "change" from within the system. In Chicago, Harold Washington, elected in 1983 as the city's first black mayor, slashed jobs and services and oversaw Chicago's murderous police department. In 1985, Philadelphia mayor Wilson Goode oversaw the FBI/cop bombing of the MOVE commune, killing eleven people, five of them children. In 1989, David Dinkins, a member of the Democratic Socialists of America led by Michael Harrington, became the first black mayor of New York City. He promised to tame the largely black city workers unions with his pledge to Wall Street: "They'll take it from me."

In the 1960s and '70s, while co-opting a layer of civil rights activists, the capitalist rulers also waged a war of police terror against black radicals, particularly targeting the Black Panther Party. The Panthers originated at just about the same time the SNCC militants were embracing Black Power. In Oakland, California, a group of young black militants led by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale appeared on the scene, dressed in black leather jackets and berets and lawfully carrying rifles. Within the space of one short year, the Panthers would win the allegiance of thousands.

The Panthers represented the best of a generation of young militants who sought a revolutionary solution to the oppression of black people. Despite their militancy and personal courage, the Panthers' program was one of black nationalism—disdainful of the only force for revolutionary change, the multiracial working class. Their isolation left them especially prey for the brutal COINTELPRO vendetta. Within a few short years, the Panthers of Newton and Seale would run for office for the petty-bourgeois Peace and Freedom Party and then the Democratic Party.

The Myth of MLK's Radicalism

This brings me back to why understanding historical context is so important. The unique circumstances—both domestically and internationally—that set the stage for the civil rights movement's struggle for legal equality have long been removed. The desperate conditions of black people today, in the context of the deteriorating conditions of the entire working class, underline that any serious fight for black rights must take as its starting point the need to uproot the capitalist order. Today, black workers remain a strategic part of the working class.

For a number of years, we have seen groups raising the call for a "new civil rights movement." One that immediately comes to mind is the By Any Means Necessary (BAMN) group initiated by the fake-Trotskyist Revolutionary Workers League in California in 1995. On the one hand, the call is just plain stupid—you cannot suck a movement out of your thumb. Politically, it is an appeal to revive the same type of liberal pressure politics that cut off the revolutionary potential of militant black activists in the 1960s in service of the Democratic Party. But in this, BAMN is not alone.

The same political perspective is seen in the reformist left's adulation of King. About a year ago, while poring through some left-liberal and self-proclaimed socialist papers and Web sites, I was struck (maybe naively) at how often King was cited as the authority for whatever cause the liberals and reformists were promoting. The invocation of King is a naked appeal to the not-so-progressive wing of the bourgeoisie: Dear Congressman, this cause (whatever it is) is so wholesome that even King would support us—you should too.

A United for Peace and Justice "Action Alert" (19 January 2009) on the U.S. Labor Against the War Web site declared: "We honor King's legacy by continuing to work for a new foreign policy which recognizes that there are no military solutions in Gaza or Iraq and Afghanistan." *Socialist Action* declared, "Dr. King... spoke on behalf of all the exploited and oppressed.... Dr. King's fight is still before us, as is his inspiration" (January 2004).

Nobody has pushed this more tirelessly than the WWP and the ISO. King's picture is plastered all over the WWP Web site and posters for their "Bail Out the People" campaign. *Workers World* cites the "transformative" last year of King's life, during which it claims he "had come around to the understanding that merely altering the appearance of the capitalist system would in a short time amount to little more than a cruel betrayal of the fierce urgency to change the system." They add: "This contradiction pushed King toward...an anti-capitalist struggle" (*Workers World* online, 3 September 2008).

The ISO's Brian Jones chimes in that "in that last year of his life," King "campaigned for radical, social-democratic reforms that are *still* far beyond what the Democratic Party is prepared to accept" (*Socialist Worker* online, 19 January 2009).

New America

WV Photo

Social-democratic advisers to Martin Luther King. Bayard Rustin (far left) seen here with Max Shachtman. Right: Michael Harrington.

Normally a little slicker, the centrist Internationalist Group (IG) got on the bandwagon in their *Internationalist* (May 2008) report on the 1 May 2008 ILWU longshore workers' port shutdown against the occupation of Iraq. The IG wrote without any comment, "The crowd was most animated when actor Danny Glover read from Martin Luther King's speech against the Vietnam War calling for a 'radical revolution in values' and restructuring of the U.S. economy."

The May Day action, a powerful demonstration of the kind of working-class action that is needed against the imperialist occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan, was politically undermined by the ILWU bureaucracy. The bureaucrats disappeared the occupation of Afghanistan, widely supported by the Democrats, and channeled the anger of the ranks against the Iraq war and their desire to defend their union into "national unity" patriotism and support for Obama. (See "ILWU Shuts West Coast Ports on May Day," *WV* No. 914, 9 May 2008.) The acclaim given King by Glover and the ILWU tops exemplified the politics of the event.

King was explicitly clear that in the era of Black Power with angry black youths and workers groping for a revolutionary solution to their oppression, he had been compelled to oppose the Vietnam War because of growing criticism of his hypocritical appeals for "nonviolence." In response to the fake socialists who concoct an "anti-imperialist" King, I'll let King speak for himself: "I knew that I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today—my own government." In a speech at Riverside Church, King chastised Johnson for suppressing Vietnam's "only noncommunist revolutionary political force, the unified Buddhist Church" ("Beyond Vietnam," 4 April 1967). He issued the timeworn appeal for "reordering our priorities, so that the pursuit of peace will take precedence over the pursuit of war," this being "our greatest defense against Communism" (Martin Luther King Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?* [1967]).

The ISO's Jones lavishes praise on King's 1967 book, *Where Do We Go from Here?* In that book the "anti-capitalist" King urged America's rulers to "seek to remove those conditions of poverty, insecurity and injustice which are the fertile soil in which the seed of Communism grows and develops." King bemoaned the "sad fact" that "comfort" and "complacency" have "driven many to feel that only Marxism has the revolutionary spirit."

That the ISO & Co. seek to boost King's credentials by portraying him as a "democratic socialist"—which he wasn't—certainly tells a lot about *them*. The whole purpose of social democracy is to tie the working class to its "own" rulers, to inculcate among the workers the inviolability of the capitalist state, to contain radicalization and prevent revolutionary upsurge in times of social crisis. Social democracy is a key prop of capitalist rule—a lesson paid for in the blood of workers and imperialism's colonial slaves around the world.

Today, the Soviet Union no longer exists, and its destruction has been accompanied by a retrogression in consciousness, albeit unevenly, to the point where politically advanced workers no longer identify their struggles with the goals of socialism. King got his wish.

But things change. The American bourgeoisie's class war on the working masses has been so one-sided for years that young militants today tend to see only the painful and pathetic reality of the racist ideology that pervades all sectors of society in "normal" times. But when powerful social struggles erupt, these attitudes are rapidly swept aside by the developing consciousness of shared class interest. This has been borne out time and time again in U.S. history. Socialist revolution is the only means for delivering the exploited and oppressed from the capitalist bondage that took the place of the chains of slavery. And in that struggle, black workers will play a vanguard role as the section of the proletariat with the least to lose and the most to gain from a fundamental reshaping of the existing social order.

Our study of the civil rights period is critical to exposing those who have stood and continue to stand as props to the capitalist system, obstacles to the development of revolutionary consciousness. So, I will conclude by again citing the programmatic statement of the Spartacist League/U.S.:

> "The proletariat is the only revolutionary class in modern society. Only the revolutionary conquest of power by the multiracial working class, emancipating the proletariat from the system of wage slavery, can end imperialist barbarity and achieve the long-betrayed promise of black freedom. We seek to build the Leninist vanguard party which is the necessary instrument for infusing the working class with this understanding, transforming it from a class *in itself*—simply defined by its relationship to the means of production—to a class *for itself*, fully conscious of its historic task to seize state power and reorganize society."■

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Miners...

(continued from page 1)

why the Appalachian mines today increasingly resemble ticking time bombs. Hard-fought, and often bloody, class battles won union safety committeemen the right to shut down unsafe mines. But workers in non-union mines have no organization to defend them and so risk losing their jobs merely for speaking out against dangerous conditions. Of the 48 mines that the Feds have deemed most dangerous, 44 are non-union. Without aggressive organizing, the union will keep losing ground, leaving more non-union miners at the mercy of the mine owners.

A major factor in the sharp decline of the mining workforce over the past three decades is the expansion of surface strip mining, which is more efficient, cheaper and requires fewer workers than deep underground mining. And as the bosses close down union mines, they open new, non-union operations, often in Wyoming, Utah, Colorado and other areas far from Appalachia. Nonetheless, coal miners still have tremendous potential social power. Coal provides half the electricity in the U.S. and is an export. This power, though, is kept in check by the pro-capitalist

Ellis/Charleston Gazette

Massey CEO Don Blankenship denounced mine safety rules at anti-union rally that he organized on Labor Day last year.

UMWA leadership. In an April 15 statement lauding "Obama's demands for improved mine safety," UMWA head Roberts subordinates the union to the bosses' government, offering: "The UMWA stands ready to do all we can to assist [Labor] Secretary Solis and Assistant Secretary Main in their effort to keep our miners safe."

In the aftermath of the Sago, West Virginia, mine disaster four years ago, capitalist Democratic Party politicians pledged to overhaul safety procedures and demand greater accountability from the mine owners. A flurry of "investigations" and Congressional hearings followed, and the Miner Act of 2006 was passed.

Now the Democrats, including Governor Manchin and President Obama, are again wringing their hands over mine safety while preparing another whitewash and cover-up response. The truth of the matter is that government officials knowingly give the coal barons free rein to run the mines as deathtraps. Despite the many documented dangers at Upper Big Branch, federal inspectors just went about business as usual, issuing citations and fines knowing full well that mine operator Performance Coal, a subsidiary of Massey Energy, would continue to flagrantly violate safety standards. The simple truth is that government outfits like MSHA do not exist to protect workers. While occasionally giving the employers a slap on the wrist, they serve to breed faith in the agencies of the ruling class as a substitute for union struggle.

WV Photo

AP

Left: Militant coal miners during 1976-79 Stearns, Kentucky, strike. A central demand of the strike was an elected union safety committee with power to pull workers out of dangerous areas. Right: Miners in Appalachia, Virginia, burn copies of proposed contract during 1977-78 strike that defied Taft-Hartley slave-labor law.

Safety Held Hostage to Profits

Massey Energy, the nation's fourth-largest coal company, made $104 million profit in 2009, in no small part by eliminating 700 jobs and slashing wages and benefits. At the same time, the company has ramped up production of high-quality metallurgical coal, used for steel production, in its Appalachian mines. Prices for this kind of coal have been climbing, driven by high demand from steelmakers in China and India. With the output at Upper Big Branch *tripling* in 2009, miners reported working 18-hour shifts, with no recourse for refusal short of leaving the job.

Compounding this dangerous speedup, the coal seams at the mine are naturally "gassy," with up to 2 million cubic feet of methane released into the mine every 24 hours. Ventilation is essential to prevent the buildup of methane and coal dust. But in the name of nonstop production Massey executives brazenly violated safety rules. The mine racked up more than 1,300 safety violations from government inspectors since 2005, a rate several times the national average. Of 129 federal violations this year, 32 were related to dust, ventilation or combustible materials. In January, the mine was cited for having a ventilation fan that ran in *reverse* for three weeks, blowing dirty air *into* a mine tunnel. Accumulation of explosive methane gas was so pronounced that the mine had to be evacuated several times in recent months.

As the man calling the shots at Massey, Blankenship acts every bit like a feudal aristocrat lording it over his serfs, a reflection of the barbaric values of the U.S. ruling class, which drips with the blood of working people and the oppressed everywhere. For years, he has openly campaigned against mine safety regulations, including through court suits, and defied them with impunity. In an internal company memo that became public in 2006, Blankenship instructed mine superintendents to place coal production ahead of safety, complaining, "We seem not to understand that coal pays the bills."

Getty

April 7: Massey miners pause during attempt to rescue four workers who were later found dead.

When miners are killed on the job, as 49 have been at Massey-owned properties since 2000, it is written off as a "statistically insignificant" cost of doing business. Blankenship reportedly had a special phone installed at Upper Big Branch so that he could call managers to protest whenever production slowed. One longtime Massey miner told ABC News (8 April) that working for Massey was "like living under a hammer. It's all about the bottom line, we all know that."

Blankenship earned his stripes at Massey as a vicious union-buster. In the case of Upper Big Branch, he flew in by helicopter to personally shower workers with empty promises if they voted out the UMWA when Massey acquired the mine in 1993—and to threaten them with closing it down if they did not. After the first vote ended in a tie, Blankenship brought miners to concerts and handed out gifts to successfully sway the second vote in his favor. Then almost overnight, production was jacked up, shifts were increased to 12 hours and bonuses cut. Over time, the union supporters were driven out of the mine.

To this day, Blankenship has continued his crusade against the UMWA. Last September, he held an anti-union "Friends of America" rally and concert to counter the union-organized Labor Day rally. Literally dressing himself in the red-white-and-blue of racist U.S. imperialism, Blankenship railed against mining safety regulations. That the labor bureaucracy peddles the same flag-waving chauvinism is a prime example of how it subordinates the interests of its membership to those of the capitalist employers.

While Massey and its CEO are particularly vicious, they are not aberrations. The other big U.S. mining companies in Appalachia all have abysmal safety records. By the same token, the coal barons are an important component of the capitalist class as a whole. The bourgeoisie, a tiny minority that owns the mines, factories and other means of production, derives its wealth from the exploitation of labor and is backed by all the institutions of the state. In the aftermath of the explosion at Upper Big Branch, the market and stock analysts remained bullish on Massey, judging the mass death of workers as a small bump in the road to greater profits.

Democrats, Republicans: Class Enemies of Workers

Ever since the disaster, bourgeois liberals and the trade-union misleaders have pointed the finger at the Bush administration for its accommodation of the coal operators. While Bush did his level best to help line the pockets of his corporate cronies, his model for MSHA was the Democratic Clinton White House's "New OSHA" (Occupational Safety and Health Administration), defined by its "partnership" with business based on "voluntary compliance." Elected with the support of Illinois coal interests, Obama has to date continued the same collusion with the industry magnates as his predecessor.

Soon after Obama appointed him to head MSHA, Main backed off an initiative announced by the administration in May that would have lowered the legal limit on coal dust levels in underground mines. Federal and state standards for controlling coal dust in underground mines date back nearly a century, and are not adequate to prevent explosions in modern, highly mechanized operations,

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Continental...

(continued from page 12)

ground workers, from cleaners and baggage handlers to aircraft mechanics, are employees of largely non-union "third-party" subcontractors, and many domestic routes are now flown by regional affiliates, where workers typically earn far less. At the outset of the organizing campaign, there were 15,000 fleet service workers at Continental. After the union won certification, Continental announced plans to outsource 150 ramp jobs at seven stations serviced by its regional partners. The increasing use of subcontractors poses a broader task for the airline unions: organizing the unorganized throughout the industry, whether at the carriers or subcontractors, and winning equal pay for equal work, no matter the employer. But rather than fighting to organize the workers at the "third party" outfits, the union bureaucrats denounce these workers as "scabs."

At a 2008 national summit on outsourcing, jointly sponsored by the Teamsters and the "Business Travel Coalition," union leaders representing airline mechanics urged government officials to strengthen "war on terror" security measures at third-party repair stations. A taste of what this would mean in practice was shown by the government's 2005 anti-immigrant raid on the non-union TIMCO maintenance facility in Greensboro, North Carolina, during which 27 mechanics were arrested and later deported. As well, the bureaucrats pushed increased U.S. government inspections and protectionist legislation directed at the overseas shops. It is in the vital interest of the labor movement to fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

Few industries are as conducive to coordinating joint struggle as air transport. But in his speeches to Continental workers, Hoffa promoted "save American jobs" chauvinism in support of a Congressional moratorium on foreign outsourcing. Whether by blaming mechanics abroad for jobs lost or railing against Mexican truckers, Hoffa & Co. poison the perspective of international labor solidarity. With the European flag carriers gunning for their unions, strikes have recently broken out in Britain, Germany and Italy. In March, the Teamsters and TWU made headlines for meeting with an official of the union representing British Airways flight attendants, shortly before they went on strike. But no labor action was taken in the U.S. to back up the strikers; the Teamsters did not mobilize its ground workers to refuse to work the arriving scab aircraft.

Despite the hard times, there are indications that airline workers are ready to test the waters. Those who remain at the major carriers are still heavily unionized and many are eager to restore what was lost over the last decade. At American Airlines, where nine union contracts are in mediation, the flight attendants and fleet service workers filed with the NMB for a release from talks, the first step in a long process to a potential strike under the RLA. As is typically the case, the request was denied. Other carriers, among them Continental, United, US Airways and Southwest, have also stalled for years on reaching agreements with their unions. What is necessary is for the unions to fight together in a common front against the bosses and their government.

Airline unions embody a strategic concentration of integrated union power in the "open shop" South, where a massive organizing drive is key for labor to regain its strength. In fact, with the victory at Houston-based Continental, the next major arena for organizing at the airlines is Atlanta-based Delta on the heels of its merger with Northwest. A large number of the non-union subcontractors in the industry are also headquartered in the South, where "right to work" laws have historically been enforced by racist terror. To organize the South will require a labor leadership that actively champions black rights and fights in the interests of all the oppressed.

AP

PATCO air traffic controllers union leaders hauled off in chains during 1981 strike.

The way forward is the forging of a class-struggle leadership committed to mobilizing union power independently of and in opposition to the capitalist politicians and government boards. It was just such a leadership, composed of Trotskyists and their sympathizers, that helped build the Teamsters into a powerful union. In 1934, these militants set out to organize every truck driver and warehouse worker industry-wide in Minneapolis. First to win union recognition and then a contract, the city's proletariat and its allies were mobilized in mass strike action involving pitched battles with scabs, cops and the National Guard. In assessing the strikes, James P. Cannon, a founder and leader of American Trotskyism, noted:

> "The modern labor movement must be politically directed because it is confronted by the government at every turn. Our people were prepared for that since they were political people, inspired by political conceptions....
>
> "They prepared everything from the point of view of class war. They knew that power, not diplomacy, would decide the issue. Bluffs don't work in fundamental things, only in incidental ones. In such things as the conflict of class interests one must be prepared to fight."
>
> —*The History of American Trotskyism* (1944)

The airline industry under capitalism is a paradigm of irrationality. The current air traffic control system is based on World War II-era radar technology. Many pilots are paid poverty-level wages, with some even living off food stamps. Critical maintenance inspections are routinely put off by the bosses, courting death and disaster. The contradiction between the inherently international character of the industry and how it is operated by nationally-based rival carriers is a crystalline example of the generalized anarchy of capitalist production for profit. To end this capitalist chaos requires a collectivized economy with centralized planning, which will come about only through socialist revolution. What's needed is to build a workers party that, standing at the head of the exploited and oppressed, fights for the expropriation of the capitalist class and the establishment of a workers government.■

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according to government research that regulators have never acted upon. Exposure to coal dust also is the cause of coal workers' pneumoconiosis, known as black lung disease. One sure sign of the waning power of the UMWA is the resurgence of this slow killer, which has felled more than 10,000 miners in the past decade, increasingly including younger miners.

In its 32-year history, MSHA is not known to have ever shut down an unsafe mine. Under Main, MSHA still allows mines to operate despite hundreds of safety violations and ample warnings of imminent catastrophe—as evidenced by its treatment of the Upper Big Branch mine. On the heels of the disaster, Obama has pledged more inspectors, stronger federal laws and more persistent investigations. These measures are a smokescreen for further sacrificing the health and lives of workers to the corporate bottom line.

For a Class-Struggle Leadership of the Unions!

Coal miners were among the first sections of the American working class to organize into unions. Moreover, the UMWA was among the first major unions to be racially integrated, beginning in the late 19th century, with blacks serving as local officers, not just rank-and-file members. Time and again, miners displayed great courage and sacrifice in bloody class battles, such as Matewan and Harlan County. It was the struggle to organize the miners in Harlan County in the 1930s that gave rise to what became the American labor movement's anthem, "Which Side Are You On?"

Yet time and again, the miners' combativity came up against the pro-capitalist policies pushed by UMWA leaders. Former UMWA president and current AFL-CIO head Richard Trumka exemplifies this class collaboration. Trumka got his start in the UMWA bureaucracy as a lawyer on the staff of Arnold Miller, who invited the government's Labor Department to intervene in the union against his bureaucratic rival in a 1972 election. In contrast to much of the left, we told the truth: "Labor Department Wins Mine Workers' Election" (*WV* No. 17, March 1973). Our warning was borne out as Miller, in cahoots with the government, sought to stifle union struggle. Government out of the unions!

Miller repeatedly tried to shove sellout contracts down workers' throats. The 110-day coal strike of 1977-78, in which miners defied a Taft-Hartley back-to-work order issued by Democrat Jimmy Carter, was carried out *in defiance* of Miller. The UMWA ranks shut down non-union mines while scab coal was dumped on the highways, coal barges were burned on the rivers and railroad bridges on coal spurs were blown up. The strike, joined by 80,000 miners, shut down half of U.S. coal production. But they were ultimately forced back to work by the union misleaders. The hated Miller was forced to resign in 1979. Posturing as a militant, Trumka returned to become head of the UMWA in 1982 after coal miners rebelled against a sellout contract brokered by Miller's successor.

In 1984, Massey, at the instigation of Blankenship, who then ran the Rawls mine, refused to participate in negotiations for the national coal agreement, insisting that each mine have a separate contract. Trumka broke with the union's tradition of national strike action, instead calling "selective," isolated strikes and relying on support from "friend of labor" Democratic politicians. Backed up by the state police and the Reagan administration, Massey pulled out all the stops, hiring a private paramilitary army, including mercenaries fresh from killing workers and peasants abroad in Central America and elsewhere for U.S. imperialism. The company's strikebreaking arsenal included attack dogs and M-16s, armored personnel carriers, helicopters and an armored locomotive. After 15 bitter months, the UMWA misleaders signed a sellout contract that gave Massey's mines separate contracts. By 1988, Massey had closed down or sold most of its union mines, usually reopening them as non-union operations. Today, all of Massey's mines are non-union.

During the 1989-90 Pittston strike, a strategic coal preparation plant was occupied, and 50,000 additional miners walked out in solidarity with the more than 1,500 striking Pittston miners. But Trumka and Cecil Roberts herded them all back to work. Rather than extending the strike or making any effort to stop scab coal, the UMWA tops pushed "civil disobedience" stunts and "Corporate Campaign" lobbying. Trumka again signed a secret sellout deal that allowed Pittston to buy out of the health care fund.

The bankruptcy of the UMWA misleaders is shown by their refusal to mobilize the union in defense of its own militants. When the Feds arrested five Kentucky miners in 1987 in connection with the Massey strike, framing them up on charges stemming from the shooting death of a scab, *Trumka refused ta allaw the union to defend these class-war prisoners*. They were convicted and sentenced to 35 to 45 years in prison. While three of the miners were finally released, Donnie Thornsbury, who was UMWA Local 2496 president, remains in prison. Labor must demand: Free Donnie Thornsbury! Nor did the uninn tops do anything to defend Jerry Dale Lowe, a safety committeeman from Logan County, West Virginia, who was framed up for the shooting death of a scab contractor during a bitter strike and spent eleven years in federal prison. Actively involved in Lowe's defense was the Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League.

The profit-hungry capitalists exhibit a depraved indifference to the lives of those they exploit. Across the country, an estimated 177 workers on average die *every day* from work-related causes—13 of those as a result of workplace accidents, the equivalent of an Upper Big Branch disaster every two days—and many more are injured. Only when the working class rips industry from the hands of the capitalists and establishes a planned socialist economy will safety govern working conditions. This task, in turn, requires forging a revolutionary workers party that will unite the struggle of the multiracial working class with the cause of the downtrodden masses in the ghettos and barrios and of those oppressed by U.S. imperialism. ***Remember the Upper Big Branch miners! Organize the unarganized!***■

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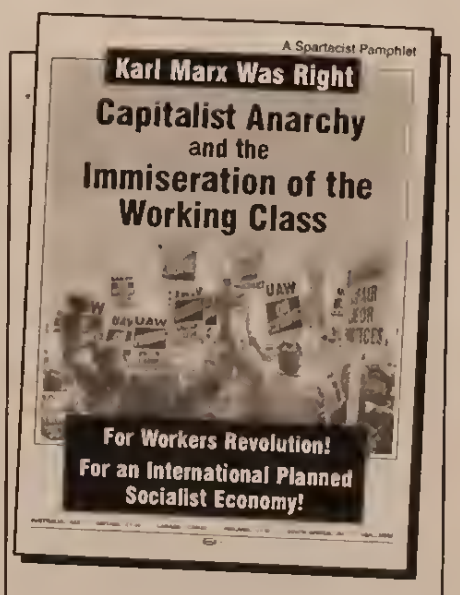

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Union Organizing Victory at Continental Airlines

Labor scored a victory on February 12, when it was announced that the nearly 8,000 Continental Airlines fleet service workers had voted to join the Teamsters, capping a 13-year organizing campaign that involved two other unions and five previous representation elections. These workers, mainly ramp and cargo agents who perform difficult, physically demanding labor for as little as $10 per hour, had been one of the largest non-union work groups in the airline industry. After almost a decade of mass layoffs, wage and benefit cuts and onerous work-rule changes, they again braved the company's wrath to vote for the union, this time with success.

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Continental fleet workers celebrate Teamsters organizing victory, February 12.

But the election victory is only a first step. Winning a contract is far from automatic. Over the years, in order to head off the unionization of the fleet service workers, the company did everything from issuing empty promises and holding mandatory anti-union workplace meetings to cultivating a network of spies and finks and selectively disciplining union activists. The same tactics will continue to be used against union supporters in order to intimidate the workforce and stonewall on contract negotiations. It is crucial for the Teamsters—and the other unions at Continental—to defend the new members.

This defense must go hand in hand with the fight against racist discrimination. At Continental, where fleet service workers are heavily black and Latino in many stations, it was not uncommon for anonymous propaganda retailing vicious slanders against the union and its supporters, at times laced with racist appeals, to be circulated throughout the workplace. Just before voting began in January, workers had to protest flyers smearing organizers as "pimps." Meanwhile, hangman's nooses recently turned up in the operations area of Newark airport, a union stronghold. The lynch rope embodies a program of white supremacy and violence against black people. The union must combat such provocations if it is to consolidate itself.

The success at Continental, however fragile, stands out against the wave of setbacks labor has suffered for many years, which has been made all the worse by the current sharp economic downturn. It is a testament to the determination and sacrifice of hundreds of volunteer organizers, who struggled together for years against lies and intimidation by the company. In addition to wanting to improve their lot, many were spurred on by chronic abuse from management and derision toward their "unskilled" labor, others by blatant favoritism on the job. By all accounts, the decisive factor in this election was the organizers' efforts in traveling throughout the Continental system to unite workers at outlying stations behind the union.

Even as Continental was turning the screws on its fleet service workers, the carrier was able to keep them from organizing for so long in no small part because the leadership of the unions—whether the Teamsters, the International Association of Machinists (IAM) or the Transport Workers Union (TWU)—steered clear of anything smacking of class struggle. One missed opportunity occurred in 2005, when the IAM-represented flight attendants at Continental voted to reject concessions, putting in jeopardy the company's goal of wresting major givebacks from all its union workers. At the time, the Machinists were attempting to organize the fleet service workers, but there was no move to link the two causes. Instead, the IAM tops foisted a new concessionary deal on the flight attendants while allowing the organizing campaign to flounder.

Divisions along craft lines and between workers at different carriers, regional affiliates and "third party" subcontractors sap the strength of the many unions in the airline industry. Mergers, such as that of Delta and Northwest and the possible Continental-United combination, have given the bosses another opening to pit workers against each other in order to impose layoffs and cutbacks. Nonetheless, workers in the industry have enormous potential power, as air transport of both passengers and cargo is vital to a modern industrial economy. What is needed is a single industry-wide union that encompasses everyone from baggage handlers to pilots.

The disastrous consequences of this atomization were laid bare in the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) strike at Northwest Airlines in 2005. Not only did the leaders of the other unions refuse to shut down Northwest in solidarity with the AMFA union, but IAM officials criminally engaged in open strike-breaking under the pretext that the AMFA craft union had carried out raiding operations against the IAM. The strike went down to a bitter defeat, and *all* airline workers are now worse off.

It should hardly be news to union "leaders" that when unions scab on each other, labor loses. This was seen clearly when the PATCO air traffic controllers union was smashed in 1981 by Republican president Ronald Reagan, implementing plans drawn up by the Democratic Carter administration. Responsibility for the defeat lay squarely with the leaders of the IAM, Teamsters and other unions who refused to honor the picket lines and shut down the airports. The smashing of PATCO laid the groundwork for a quarter-century of givebacks and union-busting from which labor has yet to recover.

IBT

October 2009: Continental workers at Newark airport rally behind Teamsters banner.

For a Class-Struggle Leadership of the Unions!

At Continental, the Teamsters also represent the mechanics, whose contract became amendable on the first day of 2009, shortly before the union kicked off its bid to organize the fleet service workers. During this time, the union tops sought to bring out both work groups together only for a few rallies outside Continental's hubs in Houston, Newark and Cleveland. In speeches at these rallies, Teamsters president James Hoffa praised the virtues of supposed "allies" in the capitalist Democratic Party, outlining a legalistic response to the company's anti-union dirty tricks. It is the reliance on the political agents and institutions of the class enemy—the calling card of the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy as a whole—that has hastened the decline in union power.

An earlier TWU organizing rally for the Continental fleet service workers in Newark featured one local Democratic Party politician after another seeking votes in the 2008 elections. The union tops spent a whopping ***$450 million*** of union members' dues money on the 2008 bourgeois elections. Upon coming to power, Barack Obama, a Wall Street Democrat, imposed harsh austerity measures on unions, beginning with the United Auto Workers. In 1978, Jimmy Carter pushed through the deregulation of the airline industry, which opened a new round in the carriers' war on labor. Democrat Bill Clinton would later invoke the Railway Labor Act (RLA) 14 times to ban potential rail and airline strikes. Labor must break with the Democratic Party!

During the campaign at Continental, the Teamsters and 30 other unions began lobbying for a rule change proposed by the Obama appointees on the National Mediation Board (NMB) that would bring the union certification procedures for rail and airline workers in line with those in other industries. To win union recognition by NMB precedent today, the majority of an entire work group has to favor unionization, with absent ballots automatically counted as "no" votes; the change would make it a majority of those voting. We would support such a change, as companies like Continental and Delta pad their employee rosters to rig the vote.

But the union tops' declaration that this would "level the playing field" is a lie. The reality is that the NMB, whatever its composition, is a capitalist government agency set up to impose "class peace" and bind the unions to the bourgeois order. Under government boards like the RLA, the deck will always be stacked in favor of the bosses. If the certification rules change, so will their anti-union tactics. The unions were built through hard class struggle in defiance of labor laws and, no less today, that is what is decisive. By accepting the framework of the RLA, the union bureaucrats are reduced to tinkering with the bosses' rules in a losing game.

Saddled with a leadership wedded to the rule of capital, airline workers have taken it on the chin for years. Amid the wave of airline bankruptcies that followed the 11 September 2001 attacks, the bosses wrung billions in wage and benefit concessions from the unions and drastically chopped their employment levels. Continental first pioneered this form of union-busting back in 1983, when then-honcho Frank Lorenzo filed for Chapter 11 in order to tear up union contracts, shed jobs and slash pay. The bloodletting has continued to this day, as the airline bosses cite "low cost" competition, fuel prices and now the faltering economy to make the workers pay for the vicissitudes of capitalism.

Meanwhile, increasing numbers of

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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Repudiating Our Position on Haiti Earthquake

A Capitulation to U.S. Imperialism

Statement of the International Executive Committee of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

The following statement was issued on April 27.

In its articles on the Haitian earthquake, *Workers Vanguard*, the newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S., committed a betrayal of the fundamental principle of opposition to one's "own" imperialist rulers. In addition to justifying the U.S. imperialist troops as essential to the aid effort, these articles polemicized against the principled and correct position of demanding the immediate withdrawal of the troops. This line was carried in a number of presses in other ICL sections, becoming the de facto line of the International Communist League. Without a public accounting and correction, we would be far down the road to our destruction as a revolutionary party. ***From the beginning the only revolutionary internationalist position was to demand that all U.S./UN troops get out of Haiti!***

In our article in *WV* No. 951 (29 January), repeated in subsequent issues of the newspaper, we baldly stated:

> "The U.S. military is the only force on the ground with the capacity—e.g., trucks, planes, ships—to organize the transport of what food, water, medical and other supplies are getting to Haiti's population. And they're doing it in the typical piggish U.S. imperialist manner. We have always opposed U.S. and UN occupations in Haiti and everywhere—and it may become necessary to call for U.S./UN out of Haiti in the near future—but we are not going to call for an end to such aid as the desperate Haitian masses can get their hands on."

The International Executive Committee of the ICL repudiates this betrayal of our revolutionary program. As stated in the SL/U.S. Programmatic Statement:

continued on page 2

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

Garcia/Chicago Tribune

Down With Arizona's Racist Pass Law!

To be brown-skinned in the state of Arizona is to be a suspected criminal under the provisions of the recently enacted "Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhood Act." This apartheid-style, anti-immigrant pass law mandates the cops to stop and question anyone they think might be an "illegal" immigrant. Those who fail to immediately produce documentation proving their "right" to be in the United States could be arrested and thrown behind bars. This is the codification in law of the racist roundups of Latinos that have been carried out for years by notorious Arizona sheriff Joe Arpaio, whose prisoners are shackled in chain gangs and housed in tent cities in the blazing heat of the desert.

Outrage against the Arizona law brought out tens of thousands in protest in cities across the country on May 1. But as was the case with the massive immigrant rights demonstrations on May Day 2006, the protest leaders are channeling this outrage into the political shell game

AP

Top: Immigration cops unshackle rounded-up immigrants and expel them across Mexican border, El Paso, Texas, January 2009. Above: April 25 protest in Phoenix against Arizona's racist pass law.

that is a central pillar of capitalist rule in America—the idea that the Democratic Party is the "friend" of immigrants, labor and black people. The 2006 rallying cry of "Today we march, tomorrow we vote" paid off handsomely for the Democrats, who captured the overwhelming majority of the Latino vote in the last presidential elections. This year, chants of "Sí, se puede! Yes, we can!", the election slogan of today's Commander-in-Chief of U.S. imperialism, Barack Obama, were the chorus orchestrated by the Latino organizations, Democratic Party politicians and trade-union bureaucrats who headed the protests.

In a televised message to hundreds of thousands at a March 21 immigrant rights rally in Washington, D.C., Obama promised to "build a future worthy of our history as a nation of immigrants and a nation of laws." The ability to use such honey-coated words to mask a system which is based on the exploitation of the working class and rooted in vicious racial oppression is precisely what has made the Democratic Party the often-preferred party of the American bourgeoisie in times of war and economic crisis.

Behind the words stands the iron fist of capitalist state repression. This was seen in Arizona only a week before the

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Break with the Democrats—For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

Capitulation...

(continued from page 1)

"We unconditionally oppose all U.S. military intervention—and U.S. military bases—abroad, and defend the colonial, semicolonial and other smaller, less developed countries in the face of U.S./UN attack and embargo."

Even in very belatedly raising the call for "All U.S./UN Troops Out of Haiti Now!" in *WV* No. 955 (26 March), we continued to evade and reject the principle of opposition to the U.S. imperialist occupation of neocolonial Haiti. Moreover this article stated: "As we made clear in our article, 'Haiti Earthquake Horror: Imperialism, Racism and Starvation' (*WV* No. 951, 29 January), while we were not for the U.S. military going into Haiti, neither were we going to demand, in the immediate aftermath of that horrific natural disaster, the immediate withdrawal of any forces that were supplying such aid as was reaching the Haitian masses." In fact, our earlier article had not clearly stated that we were not for the U.S. troops going in nor did it even call the U.S. military takeover what it was.

The U.S. military invasion was designed to provide a "humanitarian" face-lift to bloody U.S. imperialism and was aimed at securing U.S. military control in Haiti and reasserting American imperialist domination over the Caribbean, including against imperialist rivals like France. In failing to oppose the invasion, we also ignored the particular danger this posed to the Cuban deformed workers state (as well as to the bourgeois nationalist-populist regime of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela). We accepted Washington's line that the provision of aid was inextricably linked to the U.S. military takeover and thus helped to sell the myth peddled by the Democratic Party Obama administration that this was a "humanitarian" mission. Our statement that "it *may* become necessary to call for U.S./UN out of Haiti in the *near* future" (emphasis added) amounted to giving conditional support to U.S. military intervention. As one leading party comrade argued, the only difference between the position we took and August 4, 1914, when the German Social Democrats voted war credits to the German imperialist rulers at the outset of the First World War, is that this was not a war.

Thus we gutted the revolutionary internationalist essence of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution linking the fight for social and national liberation to the struggle for proletarian state power both in neocolonial and in more advanced countries. This means educating the proletariat in North America, and internationally, that its class interests lie in actively championing the fight against the imperialist domination of Haiti. Instead our articles did the opposite, promoting illusions in U.S. imperialist "democracy" as the savior of the Haitian people. We all but echoed Barack Obama as he dispatched imperialist combat troops, including elements of the 82nd Airborne Division and a Marine expeditionary unit. One doubts that we could so easily have taken such a position if the Republican Bush administration were still in the White House.

In its latest article, "SL Twists and Turns on Haiti" (*Internationalist*, 9 April), the centrist Internationalist Group (IG) writes: "While support to imperialist occupation is a small step for reformists, who only seek to modify imperialist *policies* rather than to bring down the imperialist system, in the case of the SL/ICL it should be harder to digest." Indeed it is. For its part, the IG treated the earthquake as an opening for revolution in Haiti, asserting: "This small but militant proletariat can place itself at the head of the impoverished urban and rural masses seeking to organize their own power, particularly at present where the machinery of the capitalist state is largely reduced to rubble and a few marauding bands of police" ("Haiti: Workers Solidarity, Yes! Imperialist Occupation, No!" *Internationalist*, 20 January).

Instead of simply exposing the IG's Third Worldist fantasies, we concentrated in our polemics on zealous apologies for the U.S. imperialist military intervention, a position to the right of the IG. These centrist apologists for Third World nationalism quite correctly characterized our position as "social imperialist"—socialist in words, support for imperialism in deeds. This is a bitter pill to swallow. Only through a savage indictment of our line can we avoid the alternative of going down the road that led the founders of the IG to defect from our organization in the pursuit of forces other than the proletariat. In their case, this has ranged from remnants of the Stalinist bureaucracy that sold out to imperialist counterrevolution in the DDR to Latin American nationalists and left-talking trade-union bureaucrats.

In the context of polemics with the IG, *Workers Vanguard* misused the authority of the revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky in order to alibi support to an imperialist occupation. In his 1938 article "Learn to Think," Trotsky argued that one should not always put a minus where the bourgeoisie puts a plus. He was referring not to a military occupation force but to instances where an imperialist government might send military *aid* to anti-colonialist fighters. Moreover, Trotsky's reference in this article to workers fraternizing with an army called in to fight a fire manifestly did not refer to a situation like Haiti where U.S. imperialist troops were invading a neocolonial country, an act which *Leninists unconditionally oppose on principle*.

However, neither do revolutionaries foster illusions in such non-military aid as capitalist governments may provide. In responding to the U.S. imperialist invasion of Haiti following the earthquake, we would have done well to look to the position of our Australian section in 2005 responding to the imperialist "aid" intervention in Indonesia, specifically the secessionist province of Aceh, following the tsunami. Demanding "Australian/all imperialist military/cops get out of Aceh now!" an article in *Australasian Spartacist* titled "Australian Imperialists Seize on Tsunami Catastrophe" (No. 190, Autumn 2005) indicted imperialist aid programs. The article pointed out that "whatever short-term benefit a part of them may provide to a small number of oppressed people," such aid is "always aimed at reinforcing neocolonial subjugation of the Third World masses."

Reuters

Port-au-Prince, Haiti: U.S. soldiers seize man during distribution of food coupons, February 1.

The "Politics of the Possible"

From the time of our tendency's inception as a left opposition within the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in the early 1960s, we have recognized that national isolation must in short order destroy any subjectively revolutionary formation, not least one subjected to the pressures of operating in the heartland of world imperialism, the United States. Genuine proletarian internationalism means disciplined international collaboration, without which we cannot successfully counter the powerful pull of nationalist opportunism.

The handmaiden to our embellishment of U.S. imperialist intervention was the abrogation of international democratic centralism. The role of propaganda as the scaffolding of a revolutionary party is to publish ***the line of the party as decided through discussion and motions by the party leadership***. Prior to going into print opposing the call for "troops out of Haiti" in *WV* No. 951, the SL/U.S. Political Bureau and the International Secretariat (the resident administrative body of the IEC) abdicated responsibility by not holding an organized discussion and vote, instead setting our line through informal consultation. However, once the line was published in *Workers Vanguard* it was picked up by many of the ICL's other sectional presses, indicating that there was little initial disagreement.

A meeting of the I.S. on March 18 did at last vote to call for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. and United Nations troops. However, the motions adopted at that meeting, which became the basis for the article in *WV* No. 955, reaffirmed that "we were correct in not calling for the withdrawal of U.S. troops in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake." In stating that "the particular exceptional circumstances that obtained two months ago no longer exist," the motions also continued to insist that conditional defense of the U.S. military invasion was correct in the immediate conjuncture of a natural disaster. Moreover, while criticizing the formulation that the U.S. military was the only force on the ground with the wherewithal to deliver aid, the I.S. motions did not mandate a public correction of this statement. This kind of dishonesty was condemned by James P. Cannon, founder of American Trotskyism. In addressing a situation where the Trotskyist SWP at its 1954 convention needed to acknowledge mistakes, he noted: "You know, the Stalinists make more changes, and more rapid and drastic changes, than any other party in history. But they never say: 'We made a mistake.' They always say: 'The situation has changed.' We should be more precise and more honest."

Communism vs. Social-Patriotism

TROTSKY

LENIN

We reprint below excerpts from the "21 Conditions" for the admission of parties into the Third (Communist) International (CI), adopted by the CI's Second Congress in 1920. At the onset of World War I, the overwhelming majority of the leaders of the Second International went over to the side of their "own" bourgeoisies. This provoked sharp opposition from a small minority who held true to revolutionary internationalism—most significantly Lenin's Bolsheviks, who called for the building of a new international. Growing working-class opposition to the war and the inspiration of the October 1917 Russian Revolution sparked proletarian upheavals across Europe. Under the pressure of workers who looked to the leadership of the Communist International, various social-democratic and centrist formations like the Independent Social Democratic Party in Germany, the French Socialist Party and the Italian Socialist Party sought admission to the CI. The "21 Conditions" were aimed at winning the genuine revolutionaries within these parties while excluding not only the open social-patriots but also the centrists who masked their treachery with Marxist-sounding rhetoric.

6. Every party that wishes to belong to the Communist International is duty-bound to expose not only overt social patriotism but also the duplicity and hypocrisy of social pacifism; to explain systematically to the workers that without the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, no international courts of arbitration, no treaties of any kind curtailing arms production, no manner of "democratic" renovation of the League of Nations will be able to prevent new imperialist wars.

7. Parties wishing to belong to the Communist International are duty-bound to recognize the need for a complete break with reformism and the policies of the Center and must conduct propaganda for this among the broadest layers of the party membership. Without this, no consistent communist policy is possible.

The Communist International demands unconditionally and as an ultimatum that this break be carried out at the earliest possible date. The Communist International cannot accept that notorious opportunists as, for example, Turati, Modigliani, Kautsky, Hilferding, Hillquit, Longuet, and MacDonald should have the right to consider themselves members of the Communist International. That could lead only to the Communist International coming to resemble in large measure the ruined Second International.

8. In countries whose bourgeoisies possess colonies and oppress other nations, it is necessary that the parties have an especially clear and well-defined position on the question of colonies and oppressed nations. Every party wishing to belong to the Communist International is obligated to expose the tricks of "its own" imperialists in the colonies, to support every liberation movement in the colonies not only in words but in deeds, to demand that the imperialists of its country be driven out of these colonies, to instill in the hearts of the workers of its country a truly fraternal attitude toward the laboring people in the colonies and toward the oppressed nations, and to conduct systematic agitation among its country's troops against all oppression of colonial peoples.

—"Theses on the Conditions for Admission," August 1920; reprinted in *Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite! Proceedings and Documents of the Second Congress, 1920* (Pathfinder, 1991)

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Down With Anti-Communist Law in Poland!

Spartakist

Berlin: Spartacists at January 10 demonstration with sign in Polish (center) demanding "Down With the Ban on Communist Symbols In Poland!"

We print below the translation of an article that originally appeared in Spartakist *No. 183 (May 2010), newspaper of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).*

SPARTAKIST

On June 8, Poland's right-wing government is set to implement an amendment to the penal code criminalizing the dissemination of "communist symbolism." Signed into law by the late president Lech Kaczyński last fall after a virtually unanimous vote in the Parliament, the new measure mandates up to two years in prison for anyone who "produces, perpetuates, or imports, stores, possesses, presents, carries or sends a printout, a recording or other object" carrying "fascist, communist or other totalitarian symbolism" for other than "artistic" or "research" purposes. As against the grotesque circus of "national unity" orchestrated in the wake of the arch-reactionary president's death, the ban underlines that the interests of the proletariat are counterposed to those of all wings of the Polish bourgeoisie. Having presided over the devastation of the lives and livelihoods of millions of working people in the past two decades, Poland's capitalist rulers now seek to criminalize anything pointing to the only solution to the plight of the working masses, the oppression of women, the imperialist exploitation and war and the anti-Semitism, chauvinism and bigotry that are endemic to capitalism: international proletarian revolution and the creation of a global socialist, egalitarian society.

The Polish ban is one of a spate of such measures threatened or implemented by capitalist governments in East Europe since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the bureaucratically deformed workers states. Hungary imposed a ban on communist symbols in 1993, as did Lithuania in 2009. There are moves afoot for similar bans in Estonia, Latvia and elsewhere. In 2007, the Czech government outlawed the Communist Youth Union because it called for social ownership of the means of production. More recently, Czech reactionaries have demanded that the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia, the third-largest parliamentary party, be outlawed as well.

Such blatant censorship is an embarrassment to the "democratic ideals" hypocritically espoused by bourgeois liberals. In 2008, the European Court of Human Rights overturned a prison sentence meted out in 2004 to Attila Vajnai, one of the leaders of the ex-Stalinist Hungarian Workers Party, for wearing a red star. And in January, a Czech court ordered the legalization of the Communist Youth Union.

It is an indictment of the ex-Stalinist social democrats of the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) that its deputies in the Sejm, the lower house, having initially opposed the anti-communist amendment, then joined in voting for the legislative package that included the ban. Such opposition to the ban as SLD MPs [Members of Parliament] have expressed is confined to the legalistic framework of the Constitutional Tribunal.

Whether ultimately deemed "unconstitutional" or not, the purpose of such measures is to regiment the population and to intimidate all those who seek to fight against the injustices and ravages of capitalism. As George Toussas of the Communist Party of Greece aptly put it in a December 3 statement in the European Parliament, the Polish ban is "an act of provocation aimed at prosecuting anyone who offers resistance and fights for a better future." Poland's rulers will certainly not hesitate to attack as "communists" supporters of the SLD and other leftist groups or workers who engage in militant strikes and demonstrations. It is in the direct interest of every socialist, every trade unionist, every organization representing workers, women, gays, Jews, Romas [Gypsies], immigrants or other minorities—in Poland and internationally—to oppose this reactionary legislation.

The Nazi Holocaust: We Will Not Forget!

The drawing of an equal sign between fascism and communism by the reactionary ruling cabals of East Europe is grotesque. Communism, as exemplified by the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky and the Polish-Jewish revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg, expresses the historic and *internationalist* interests of the proletariat, based on the understanding that in liberating itself from capitalist exploitation and oppression, the working class must sweep away class society as a whole and construct a global order in which the nation-state and all forms of social

continued on page 8

Menshevism often takes the guise of "realism" and "expediency." Looking to come up with a "concrete solution" in a situation where there was no such solution from a proletarian revolutionary vantage point, we capitulated. What our small revolutionary party had to put forward was a proletarian internationalist perspective for the liberation of Haiti, above all through opposition to our "own" imperialist rulers. In the immediate situation, the only concrete expression of such a program was negative—to demand that any and all Haitian refugees be allowed into the U.S. with full citizenship rights, to oppose any deportations of Haitians who had made it here and above all to demand all U.S./UN troops out.

Our articles distorted reality in order to justify the American military presence. We correctly criticized the reformists for spreading illusions in the imperialist governments by demanding that they provide "aid, not troops" but our own response was worse. Our articles presented U.S. military intervention as the only "realistic" way for the Haitian masses to get "aid" and claimed demagogically that withdrawal of U.S. combat troops "would result in mass death through starvation." This was to treat the question not from the standpoint of Marxist program, but through the liberal lens of "disaster relief." Michael Harrington—the former leader of the Democratic Socialists of America and adviser to the "war on poverty" programs of Lyndon B. Johnson's Democratic Party administration—captured the core of such a social-democratic worldview with the expression, "the left wing of the possible."

The "politics of the possible" is a palpable pressure in the period of post-Soviet reaction, where revolution—or even, particularly in the U.S., militant class struggle—appears remote and there is an overwhelming absence of resonance for our political views. There is a yawning abyss between what we stand for and the consciousness of the working class and young radicals, even those who claim to be socialist. As we have noted, it has been very difficult to maintain our revolutionary continuity and very easy to have it destroyed.

The Fight to Maintain a Revolutionary Perspective

In fighting against the Cochranite opposition in the then-revolutionary American Socialist Workers Party in the early 1950s, James P. Cannon argued:

> "The revolutionary movement, under the best conditions, is a hard fight, and it wears out a lot of human material. Not for nothing has it been said a thousand times in the past: 'The revolution is a devourer of men.' The movement in this, the richest and most conservative country in the world, is perhaps the most voracious of all.
>
> "It is not easy to persist in the struggle, to hold on, to stay tough and fight it out year after year without victory; and even, in times such as the present, without tangible progress. That requires theoretical conviction and historical perspective as well as character. And, in addition to that, it requires association with others in a common party."
>
> —"Trade Unionists and Revolutionists," 11 May 1953

The example of the degeneration of the SWP from a revolutionary party through centrism to abject reformism is instructive. The party endured more than a decade of stagnation and isolation during the anti-Communist witchhunt. Seeing their role reduced essentially to a holding operation in the citadel of U.S. imperialism, aging party cadre like those in the Cochran wing gave up on a revolutionary perspective. The SWP majority under Cannon and Farrell Dobbs fought to preserve the revolutionary continuity of Trotskyism against this liquidationism. But they themselves were not immune from the deforming pressures that led the Cochranites to split.

Four years later, in 1957, the SWP supported the introduction of federal troops into Little Rock, Arkansas—the end result of which was the crushing of local black self-defense efforts against the howling racist mobs fighting school integration. Painting U.S. troops as reliable defenders of black people engendered significant opposition within the party in the 1950s, particularly from Richard Fraser whose program of revolutionary integrationism as the road to black freedom in the U.S. we take as our own. But the wrong line was never corrected and the view of the U.S. imperialist army as the only "realistic" force to defend civil rights protesters in the Jim Crow South against racist terror deepened. By 1964 the SWP had adopted the grotesque campaign slogan, "Withdraw the Troops from Viet Nam and Send Them to Mississippi!" By 1965, the SWP had thrown overboard the last remnant of a revolutionary opposition to imperialism, promoting the reformist lie that a classless peace movement could stop U.S. imperialism's dirty war against the Vietnamese workers and peasants.

The young SWP cadre in the Revolutionary Tendency who fought the party's degeneration were the founding leaders of our organization. Recognizing where the SWP went, and holding it up as a mirror of where we could go without correcting our mistakes and the outright betrayal of our revolutionary internationalist program in response to the Haiti earthquake, is part of the fight to preserve this continuity with Cannon's revolutionary party that extends back to Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks.

But the ability to make such a correction is hardly cause for celebration. It merely lays the basis for political rectification. We crossed the class line and the urgent necessity is to reassert and struggle to maintain the proletarian internationalist program of Leninism.■

Programmatic Statement of the Spartacist League/U.S.

Adopted in 1999 at the Tenth National Conference of the SL/U.S.

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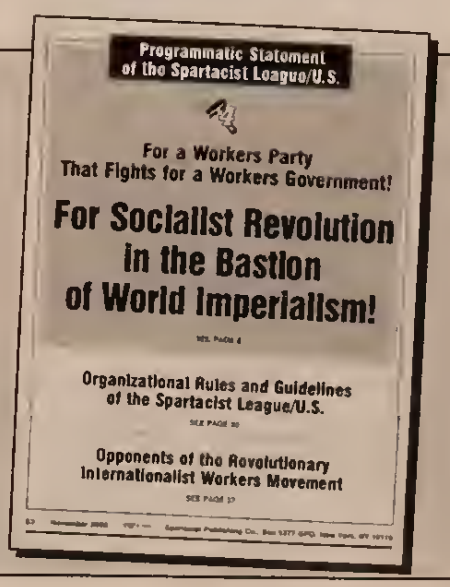

Mexico:
A Marxist Analysis of the UNAM Student Strike, 1999-2000

From 20 April 1999 through 6 February 2000, students at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) shut down the university in protest against attacks on public education. With more than 250,000 students from high school through graduate school and a main campus called University City (CU) spanning more than two million square meters in the south of Mexico City, UNAM is the biggest university in Latin America. It has

ESPARTACO

long been a center of the left in Mexico, including during the student strike and mass protests before the 1968 Olympics, which were brutally suppressed by government forces in what became known as the Tlatelolco massacre.

The 1999-2000 student strike was called against attacks that aimed to exclude thousands of poor and working-class youth from higher education, including the proposed imposition of tuition and limiting the time allowed to complete a degree. The strike polarized Mexican society, gaining support among key sectors of the working class in Mexico City. In the course of the strike, a layer of student activists broke from illusions in the bourgeois-populist Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), although many of these students turned to a more left version of bourgeois populism represented by the Zapatistas. The strike ended only when thousands of police, dispatched by the federal government and the PRD-led Mexico City government, raided CU and arrested about 700 students.

The strike took place in the context of a push by the rapacious U.S. imperialists and their lackeys in the Mexican bourgeoisie to implement austerity measures, including privatizing state-owned industries, slashing government programs and attacking the living standards of the working class and peasantry, as dictated by the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement and the International Monetary Fund. These "neoliberal" attacks were first implemented in Mexico by presidents Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-94) and Ernesto Zedillo (1994-2000)—the last two presidents from the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) that had ruled Mexico for some seven decades. In the late 1980s, a section of the PRI led by populist Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas broke away to form what became the PRD. Cárdenas lost to Salinas in the fraudulent 1988 presidential elections. When the UNAM strike began, Cárdenas was the mayor of Mexico City. In July 2000, former Coca-Cola executive Vicente Fox, of the Catholic right-wing National Action Party (PAN), won the presidential election, ending the period of PRI rule.

Our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México intervened in the strike, combating illusions in the PRD—a capitalist party that pushes populist rhetoric—and struggling to win young militants to the perspective of forging a revolutionary workers party. Seeking to bring the power of the international working class to bear in defense of the besieged strikers, after the brutal police crackdown the International Communist League mobilized protests internationally, elicited statements of solidarity and raised money for their defense, including here in the belly of the imperialist beast. We print below the translation of an article that appeared in the GEM's newspaper, *Espartaco* No. 31 (Spring 2009), on the anniversary of the strike.

José Núñez photos

Top: Unionized workers and striking students protest in defense of free education and against privatizations, Mexico City, August 1999. Above: Heated debate at General Strike Council assembly in UNAM's Che Guevara auditorium.

* * *

The UNAM strike from April 1999 to February 2000 was the longest and perhaps the most militant student struggle in the history of that institution. For ten months, tens of thousands of radicalized students, mainly from working-class and poor families, occupied the facilities of the largest university in Latin America in a vital struggle to defend free public education.

Having gone as far as it could as a student strike, this movement showed its potential for igniting proletarian struggle. Indeed, the student movement of 1999 had something that others, including 1968, lacked: the active sympathy of key sectors of the proletariat. The student struggle intersected broad worker discontent with the neoliberal policies of brutal capitalist austerity and the threat of the privatization of the energy sector, which led to numerous joint mobilizations of students and unions such as the UNT [National Workers Union], the SME [Mexican Electrical Workers Union] and sections of the SUTERM [national electrical workers union]. However, mainly thanks to the services of the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy, the working class was demobilized and the strike was left isolated.

The strike was able to stop the imposition of tuition, an important gain, but it was brutally broken in February 2000 by the armed forces of the bourgeois state. This police operation, under the joint command of the federal government and the local PRD government, left hundreds of activists in jail or expelled and their movement dismembered. Access to higher education remains out of reach for the majority (this year alone, 155,000 undergraduate applicants will not be admitted to UNAM).

During the course of our intervention in the strike—helping to extend the strike to the Universum [Science Museum] on the first day, defending the facilities, building barricades, intervening constantly in CGH [General Strike Council] assemblies and in demonstrations and workers' assemblies—we struggled for a strategy centered on mobilizing the social power of the working class and against illusions in the bourgeois populism of the PRD. The struggle for free public education has always been explosive in Mexican society, but, as with other basic rights, free, quality public education for all cannot be fully achieved under capitalism because of the nature of the system itself, which is based on maximizing profits for the capitalist class at the expense of the interests of workers and the oppressed. We struggle to win students to the side of the working class through building a vanguard workers party whose purpose would be the struggle for international socialist revolution—the only way to achieve an egalitarian communist society on the basis of abundance.

The Post-Soviet World and the Strengthening of Nationalist Populism

The political context of the UNAM strike was conditioned by the destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, which eliminated the powerful military and economic counterweight to imperialism constituted by the first and most powerful workers state, which issued from the victorious Russian Revolution of 1917. The International Communist League was unique in defending to

For Free, Quality Education for All!
Forge a Leninist-Trotskyist Workers Party!

the last barricade the Soviet degenerated workers state, which, despite its Stalinist degeneration, still had collectivized property in the means of production and a planned economy. We also fought for a proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and return the USSR to the road of Lenin and Trotsky.

The rise of U.S. imperialism as the hegemonic power after the counterrevolution brought with it an imperialist military advance and increased intervention in the neocolonial economies of the Third World. The investment of U.S. capital in Mexico underwent enormous growth and a qualitative expansion with the 1994 implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which has ruined millions of peasants. The increasing intervention of imperialist capital in Mexico led to a brutal decrease in the standard of living of the masses and a general attack on social gains, such as public education and workers' rights. It also undermined the corporatist national economic structure, which was the foundation of the septuagenarian PRI regime, enabling the PAN to come to power in the elections in 2000.

The ideologues of the bourgeoisie took advantage of the collapse of the Soviet Union to proclaim the "death of communism" and declare that Marxism was a "failed experiment." In this reactionary period, workers organizations around the world generally no longer identify with the ideals of Marxism. In Mexico, where there has never been a mass labor party and where nationalism has served to bind the working class to the bourgeoisie, for many students even the notion of the enormous social power of the working class—which they have *never* seen mobilized to a significant degree—is a mere abstraction.

AFP

Zapatista guerrilla leader Subcomandante Marcos with PRD leaders Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas (center) and Pablo Gómez (far right). Zapatistas seek to pressure bourgeois populists to reform the capitalist state.

Faced with the pro-imperialist "free market" reforms pushed by the "technocrats" of the PRI in the '90s, and without a class-struggle alternative within the spectrum of political organizations in Mexico, most leftist-minded students and workers even more strongly adopted the populist ideology of the sector of the Mexican bourgeoisie grouped around the PRD. The PRD took advantage of the massive discontent with the PRI regime and the electoral fraud in the 1988 elections. Thus, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas won the election for mayor of Mexico City in 1997. Throughout 1999, the PRD was mainly working on building an alliance with the PAN to present its then-traditional candidate, Cárdenas, as a contender in the following year's [presidential] elections —which he lost ignominiously to the neo-Cristero Fox.

At the beginning of 1999, UNAM was a bastion of the PRD in the capital (and still is). Most groups with a certain amount of influence among leftist students at the university, such as En Lucha and the Socialist Workers Party (POS), were tailing populism. Others were openly and directly the arm of the PRD at UNAM, like the "historical" CEU [University Student Congress] and the CEM [Metropolitan Student Committee]. In our interventions before and during the strike, we Spartacists denounced the class-collaborationist politics of all these organizations. The PRD, a party that is committed to the perpetuation of the Mexican capitalist system based on private property in the means of production, is the enemy of the victory of the proletariat, and its differences with the PRI and the PAN are merely about how to administer the capitalist state.

The influence of populism at UNAM was also reflected in the support for the EZLN [Zapatistas] in the CGH. It was not unusual for student assemblies to end with the singing of the Zapatista anthem, followed by the bourgeois national anthem!

Francisco Olvera

January 2008: Workers and peasants demonstrate in downtown Mexico City against NAFTA, U.S. imperialists' "free trade" rape of Mexico.

From the beginning of their movement, the Zapatistas were aptly described by Carlos Fuentes as the "first post-communist rebellion," and they explicitly stated that their ideology was "neither communist nor, as they say, Marxist." By the spring of 1994, they were not even in favor of the overthrow of the Salinas de Gortari government, and they openly reduced their role to being a mere pressure group for the democratic reform of the capitalist state. (Today, the EZLN pushes illusions in a new *bourgeois* constitution to serve the poor and oppressed, as they stated in the "Sixth Declaration," the program of the "other campaign.")

Since the Zapatista uprising in 1994, we Spartacists have called for the defense of the EZLN against the attacks of the bourgeois state and for the immediate withdrawal of the army from Chiapas. At the same time, we reject the program of the EZLN, which denies the fundamental division of society into two classes with conflicting interests and dissolves the working class in the mass of the "people." Correspondingly, they embrace and promote the fallacy of bourgeois nationalism—the supposed community of interests between the exploited and the exploiters of the same country. Camouflaged by the fashionable rhetoric of eternal "resistance," Zapatismo is an ideology of defeat; it is the clear reflection of the acceptance of the bourgeois lie of the "death of communism."

By the end of the summer of 1999, there was a radicalization of the strikers and many boasted of being communists, which was reflected in their signs and slogans. But their vision of "communism" was really a version of the same radical populism; it had more to do with Zapatismo (original [from the 1910-20 Mexican Revolution] and current) than with the October Revolution or the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat. This prefigured the current fashion among populist intellectuals of talking about "socialism," which they identify with bourgeois regimes like that of Hugo Chávez.

There is no "progressive" or "anti-imperialist" wing of the bourgeoisie, which as a class is tied to and intrinsically dependent on imperialist finance capital. The proletariat is the only class with the objective interest and the social power to destroy capitalism and satisfy the aspirations of the masses, such as political democracy, agrarian revolution or national emancipation. Formerly associated with bourgeois revolutions—like the great French Revolution of the 18th century—in the epoch of imperialist decay these democratic demands cannot be resolved without a socialist revolution with the revolutionary proletariat leading the peasant masses and the urban poor, and its international extension, especially and urgently to the imperialist colossus of the North. Only through an internationally collectivized and planned economy will it be possible to eliminate the misery inherent in this society. This is the essence of Trotsky's permanent revolution.

The Student Struggle and the Centrality of the Proletariat

The student struggle was sparked by the attempt to impose the General Regulation of Payments (RGP) in March 1999 by then-university chancellor Francisco Barnés de Castro, as part of an austerity plan that included cutting UNAM's budget by 30 percent during the presidency of Ernesto Zedillo. In response, students carried out several rolling strikes beginning March 11, in preparation for the indefinite strike that would break out on April 20. Parallel to this and until August of the same year, massive joint mobilizations of workers and students against privatizations and in defense of free education filled the streets of the city.

There was evident sympathy for the student struggle among the working class; the call for a worker-student alliance was in vogue and the slogan "SME, UNAM will triumph united!" was common. There was a conjunctural unity of interests between the striking students and the workers who were fighting against privatizations and increased poverty. As we explained in a speech on August 13 at a rally of the CGH in the Zócalo [Mexico City's main plaza]: "The fight in defense of public education, which is part of a broader struggle against the privatizing schemes directed against the working class, can go forward only if the unions also go on strike. By themselves, students lack any social power. What is needed is that labor flex its muscles through strike actions to stop production and services. That the student strike has lasted so long is due to the support received from university workers, reinforced by brigades of workers from other powerful unions" [printed in "Down With Government Repression Against UNAM Student Strike!" *WV* No. 718, 3 September 1999].

Indeed, students, together with peasants, small vendors and professionals, are part of the petty bourgeoisie, an enormous and heterogeneous social layer with no direct relationship to the means of production and highly stratified between its highest and lowest levels. Lacking social power and its own class perspective, the petty bourgeoisie is incapable of offering an alternative to capitalism; it follows the bourgeoisie or the proletariat depending on the relationship of forces between them.

We Spartacists were guided by the understanding formulated more than 40 years ago by our comrades of the Spartacist League/U.S.:

> "It is false to assume that the student movement can break its isolation by merely seeking 'allies' in the labor movement.... It is naive and hypocritical to sit back and expect the workers to 'rise,' come to the rescue of the students and remake society without revolutionary consciousness and leadership. Students must go to the workers not as students seeking allies and followers, but as revolutionaries, with the understanding that only the working class, because of its unique position as society's producers, has the power to lead a social revolution in modern society. This involves a complete change of orientation, from student radical to working-class revolutionary, and an adoption of Marxism, the ideology of the revolutionary working-class struggle.
>
> "It is *only* through the construction of a revolutionary Marxist party that the struggles of students, workers and Black people can be effectively linked."
>
> —"The Berkeley Student Strike," *Spartacist* (English-language edition) No. 9 (January-February 1967)

As an integral part of this perspective, we categorically opposed the bourgeois nationalism that dominated the student movement and the workers protests, which were usually carried out under the prominent slogan of "The fatherland cannot be sold!" and at which prominent members of the PRD like the sinister Porfirio Muñoz Ledo—a former president of the PRI who enthusiastically supported the Tlatelolco massacre—frequently enjoyed themselves parading on the platforms next to the union bureaucrats. Indeed, bourgeois nationalism has historically

continued on page 6

International Communist League pamphlet comprising three articles from ICL press: "The Development and Extension of Leon Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution," "A Trotskyist Critique of Germany 1923 and the Comintern" and "Down With Executive Offices of the Capitalist State!" These articles together constitute an introduction to the historically founded principles and program of Trotskyism (i.e., genuine Marxism).

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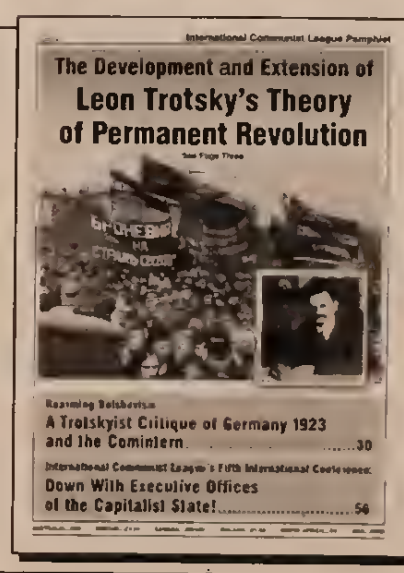

Mexico...

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been the main ideological obstacle preventing the working class in Mexico from acquiring revolutionary consciousness. As we pointed out in a 22 July 1999 flyer: "Our revolutionary internationalist defense of the working class and its struggles is counterposed to the poison promoted by the labor bureaucracy, which pushes the false ideology of unity between Mexican workers and bosses."

Universities Under Capitalism and the Perspective of the CGH

While supporting those demands in the students' six-point list that sought to prevent UNAM from becoming increasingly elite, such as through the imposition of tuition, we exposed how some other demands sowed illusions in the capitalist regime. Thus, for example, the demand for dismantling the police structure at UNAM referred only to "external" police and *porro* thug elements at the service of the administration, but not to Auxilio UNAM (now Vigilancia UNAM) [campus police]. The job of these "official" campus police forces is to regiment the students and the workers at the university and serve as spies and thugs for the authorities.

Throughout the strike, the question of Auxilio UNAM, whose members are organized in STUNAM [UNAM workers union], was a key point in our intervention. Indeed, most leftist activists consider the police (which together with the army, the courts and the jails form the core of the bourgeois state) part of the working class. This is a suicidal illusion. As we emphasized in the August 13 speech mentioned above:

> "Cops are not 'workers in uniform' but the attack dogs of the bourgeois state. The presence of cops in the university, affiliated to STUNAM, is an immediate danger for the union itself and for the student strike, as well as for any action the STUNAM may be involved in. 'Auxilio UNAM' cops out of the university and STUNAM!
> "No illusions in the PRD, a bosses' party!"

The bourgeois state is a machine of repression dedicated to the perpetuation of the capitalist system. Thus, it cannot be reformed to serve the interests of the exploited and oppressed; it must be destroyed through a socialist revolution and replaced by a workers state to defend the proletariat as the new ruling class against the bourgeoisie and to lay the basis for a socialist society.

The universities are an important pillar of capitalist society, as they are charged with training the future administrative, technical and ideological personnel of bourgeois society. The university administration is the administrative arm of the bourgeoisie within the university and it works hand in hand with the state to regiment and repress the students and workers. Thus, counterposed to the call for a University Congress, we Spartacists call for abolishing the administration and for student, teacher and worker control of the university. These slogans, together with our main call for free, quality education for all, point toward the need for socialist revolution, the only way to put both education and culture not only within reach, but also at the service of the masses. As we repeatedly explained in our interventions and propaganda during the strike:

> "We fight...for the students to receive stipends for food, transportation, study materials, etc. We call for: completely open admissions, made economically real by providing students with a living stipend! While defending access to higher education against further attacks, our program is not limited to defending the status quo of automatic admission to UNAM only for a select number of relatively privileged high schools."
>
> —"Forge a Revolutionary Workers Party!" *Espartaco* supplement, 22 July 1999

A central part of the strategy of the CGH, which took up the traditions of the 1968 student movement, was its faith in "public dialogue" with the administration. With this perspective, they ignored the reality of the divisions and contradictory class interests in society. The "Manifestos to the Nation" published by the CGH are full of such illusions: "If Dr. Francisco Barnés de Castro had been more concerned with the interests of the university community than with those of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the neoliberal policies of the Federal Government, this strike would have been avoided, and together we would have been able to find solutions to the problems of the University" (20 April 1999). The idea was to publicly discredit the administration, which presumably would then act in the interests of the educational needs of the masses. And this was the ***central, suicidal strategy*** of the CGH throughout the ten months of the strike. The bourgeoisie and its representatives cannot be "convinced" to stop exploiting, oppressing and repressing. The working class and the poor have never gained anything by "reasoning" with the capitalist exploiters, only through *class struggle*.

The CGH's illusions in the administration are analogous to the illusions of the EZLN that the government should transcend class interests and "rule by obeying." This goes hand in hand with the idea that the university can be a "democratic island" abstracted from society. In the context of the UNAM strike, the demand for a decisive University Congress *parallel* to the administration was one of the concrete expressions of the illusions in the administration. The innocuous character of this call was demonstrated by the fact that even the administration accepted it and adopted it as its own. More ominously, by the end of the strike this call became the focal point of a campaign by the administration (supported by the STUNAM bureaucracy) in favor of calling off the strike in exchange for the promise of a "University Congress" to resolve the "remaining issues."

Student Impotence: Between "Militant Dialogue" and "Powerful Actions"

All the other tendencies and organizations represented in the CGH, from the "moderates" to the "ultras," showed their political bankruptcy during the course of the strike. En Lucha and the PCM (M-L) [Mexican Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist)], perhaps the two most influential organizations in the "ultra" CGH, simply promoted a student version of populism, and they are responsible for a large part of the decisions, illusions and narrowness that characterized the CGH's politics.

The strike committee in the School of Political Science, led by ["ultra" student leader] "El Mosh," often expressed a refreshing disdain not only for the PRD, but also for the EZLN for its criticisms of the CGH from the right. In fact, in September of 1999, in a letter published in *La Jornada* newspaper, [Zapatista leader] "Subcomandante" Marcos complained bitterly about the evident political differentiation within the CGH, accusing the "ultras" (and the Political Science Committee in particular) of wanting to "impose silence" on PRD moderates and of wanting to make itself into "a homogeneous entity" through purges. Nevertheless, the political perspective of the Political Science Committee—typical of the majority of the young strikers and strategically centered on "powerful actions" such as blocking streets—is perhaps the clearest proof of the desperation and narrowness of radical student populism. Despite their militancy, these youth were politically led toward the democratic reform of the university and the state.

The other organizations who claim to be Trotskyist have a fundamental political responsibility for keeping the strike within the framework of university politics and helping to ensure that no significant number of these radical youth managed to break decisively with bourgeois politics. The Liga de Trabajadores por el Socialismo (LTS), for example, distinguished itself only by giving the dominant politics of the CGH a more militant appearance. Far from fighting illusions in "dialogue" with the administration, the LTS reduced itself to spicing them up with absurd pseudo-radical rhetoric, calling for a "militant dialogue"! On the struggle against capitalist repression, they said: "We call on the EZLN to lead this campaign, putting all resources at its service, and to actively join in the protest actions" (undated leaflet of Contra-Corriente—at that time the youth group of the LTS—and others, distributed during the UNAM strike). But the EZLN has no program to end capitalist repression, which requires overthrowing the bourgeois state through socialist revolution. The LTS's tailing of the EZLN is a reflection of its rejection, in deeds, of Trotsky's permanent revolution.

Proceso

October 1968: Mexican state terror unleashed against students in Tlatelolco massacre. Hundreds were slaughtered, thousands arrested.

From Open Illusions in the PRD to "Persona Non Grata"

The student movement experienced a significant radicalization in the summer of 1999. In the face of the recalcitrance of the elitist university authorities, the strike continued. Various sectors of the bourgeoisie and the pro-PRI trade-union bureaucracies called openly for repression, and some even called for UNAM to be closed. Utilizing his social base in the university, during the first few months of the strike Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, the head of the PRD city government, mobilized his university acolytes grouped in the CEU, la Red and Higinio Muñoz's CEM (not to mention the shameless pseudo-Trotskyists of the POS) to end the strike. Their fundamental problem was that the majority of the CGH wanted to fight.

The bourgeoisie was conscious of the possibility that the student strike might spark an explosion of proletarian struggle. Ending the strike once and for all thus became the priority. The PRD and the Cárdenas government launched a propaganda offensive against the CGH—accusing the strikers of being "ultras," "extremists," etc.—with the obvious intention of preparing the road for repression. In a supplement to *Espartaco* dated July 22 we wrote:

> "Today, many students continue to be under the illusion that the PRD is not capable of unleashing state repression against the strikers, and there is always someone in the discussions and assemblies and marches who tells us that, in spite of their disenchantment with the PRD, they have no other option for the presidential elections.... The PRD is not opposed in any way to the use of state repression, and it has shown this several times, repressing the protests of CNTE teachers and student strikers. Looking toward the presidential elections, the PRD...must prove itself capable of administering the capitalist state, in the face of the growing concern of the Mexican bourgeoisie and the imperialists about the explosive situation in Mexico."

In response to the anti-strike campaign, the PRD's organizations became increasingly discredited and isolated: in meetings of the CGH choruses of "CEU out!" were common and the term "PRDer" became more and more of an insult. As we wrote in the article quoted above, "although the openly PRD-partisan CEU has now lost its authority, the self-proclaimed Trotskyist POS, influential in the leadership of the student movement, has quickly taken its place." Even before the upcoming campaign, beginning on July 3 the POS called for an end to the strike.

On July 28, a group of pompous, right-wing "emeritus" professors—among them the "Marxist" Adolfo Sánchez Vázquez—issued a "proposal" that would become a tool of the administration, the state and the PRD against the student

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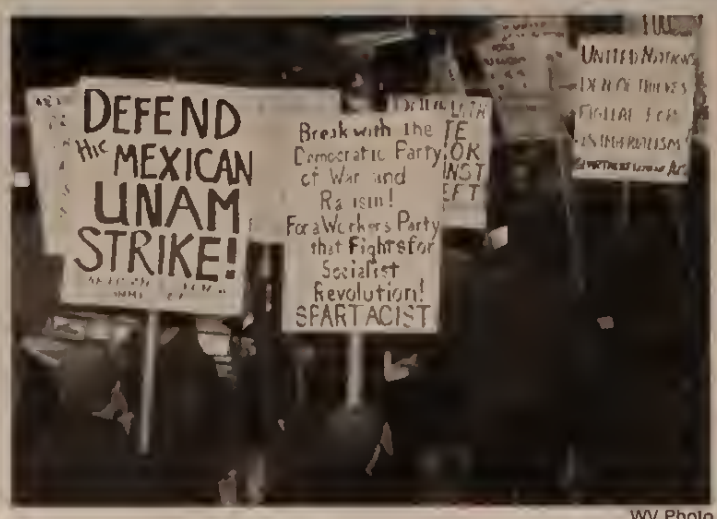

WV Photo

Francisco Olvera

Left: New York City, October 1999. Partisan Defense Committee called protests internationally against Mexican state's crackdown on UNAM strike. Right: UNAM's Che Guevara auditorium on the morning of 6 February 2000 as the police broke the strike.

strike. The "emeritus" group demanded the end of the strike in exchange for the temporary suspension of the General Regulation of Payments. The issue of fees, like all the other demands of the CGH, would be debated in "discussion and analysis spaces," after which the administration's right-wing puppet Consejo Universitario [University Council] would make decisions. In essence, the "emeritus" group was calling for the end of the strike with nothing in return.

On August 4 the PRD government brutally repressed a strike picket line at an "alternate site" for registration, resulting in more than 100 strikers being beaten and arrested. From then on, the PRD mobilized its riot police (as well as numerous *porro* thug attacks and provocations) more and more brutally and actively against the CGH. The repression deeply shook the strikers. At the same time, worker support for the student strike was more than tangible. In addition to the joint marches, every day hundreds of STUNAM workers helped students guard the facilities, and they continued to do this on their own initiative throughout the strike. It was especially significant that, beginning in July, the SME had pickets at UNAM for several weeks, carrying with them the enormous social weight of the electrical workers union to discourage any attempt to break the strike.

Far from being intimidated, the CGH kept organizing flying pickets throughout the city to guard threatened university facilities, as well as to prevent "extramural" classes and registration for the coming semester. On August 8, a few days after the first massive PRD attack on the strike, the CGH declared Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas and other prominent populists to be "persona non grata" at UNAM. Shortly afterward, the main PRD spokesman in the strike, Fernando Belaunzarán, was literally kicked out of the CGH—well deservedly, of course. The CEU ceased to exist as a current in the strike. The CEM, the POS and [the International Marxist Tendency's affiliate] Militante were profoundly discredited. The "moderates" briefly attempted to organize an "alternate CGH" as a provocation and sabotage, which only led to ridicule by the majority of the strikers.

The PRD's expulsion from the CGH was a product of disappointment and healthy fury against this bourgeois party due to the increasing repression against the CGH, and was perhaps the most significant reflection of the radicalization of the student strikers. We fought in our interventions to give this disillusionment with the PRD a *class* character: the understanding that the PRD is a bourgeois party that serves the capitalist regime, that has nothing to offer the workers and oppressed other than hunger and repression.

The Responsibility of the Union Bureaucracies

While the venal PRI bureaucracies openly supported the repression, the SME bureaucracy, worried that worker discontent might escape its control, withdrew the ephemeral workers guards from CU [the main campus of UNAM] at the beginning of August, in an obvious response to the growing disrepute of the PRD in the CGH. After the march on August 28—when ***hundreds of thousands*** of workers and the CGH mobilized against the privatizations and in defense of free education—the SME bureaucracy stopped all joint mobilizations with the students. For its part, responding to pressure from its base, the STUNAM bureaucracy gave considerable material support to the CGH, even while it backed the "democratic" provocations of the administration—from supporting the proposal of the "emeritus" group in July to the de la Fuente "plebiscite" in January 2000. More significantly, it did everything in its power to demobilize the workers. Thus, with the argument that it did not want to "confront" the student strike, the STUNAM bureaucracy postponed its strike deadline, which should have been November 1, to 1 February 2000 (when they would then call off the strike!). This was a particularly grotesque and obvious maneuver to isolate the students. As we wrote at the time: "What the student strike needs to win is precisely to be extended to the proletariat: What the nationalist bureaucracy of STUNAM wants to avoid is causing greater problems for the bourgeoisie, not for the student strikers" (*Espartaco* No. 13, Autumn-Winter 1999). In reality, the ***central responsibility*** for the isolation of the strike rests with these popular, supposedly "independent" and "militant" bureaucracies.

All unions today are led by pro-capitalist bureaucracies—the labor lieutenants of capital in the workers movement—who are conscious of their privileges deriving from their position at the head of workers organizations. The central role of the bureaucracies is to keep the working class under control and tied to the bourgeoisie. We Trotskyists fight to replace ***all*** these bureaucracies with genuine class-struggle leadership. As Leon Trotsky explained in his article "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay" (1940):

> "The trade unions of our time will serve as secondary instruments of imperialist capital to subordinate and discipline the workers and to obstruct the revolution or, on the contrary, the unions will become tools of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat....
>
> "In the epoch of imperialist decay the trade unions can be really independent only to the extent that they are conscious of being, in addition, the organs of proletarian revolution."

The Internationalist Group (IG), another of the pseudo-Trotskyist groups active in the strike, brags of having played an important role in the formation of the workers guards of the SME and other unions that were present on the main campus of UNAM for a few weeks in July and August of 1999. The presence of these guards temporarily halted the capitalist repression and showed the type of mobilizations that were necessary to win the strike. Nonetheless, in a typically centrist manner, when the IG promoted the formation of workers guards in a STUNAM meeting on 6 July 1999, it avoided any mention of the presence of the Auxilio UNAM police in the union. Then, it publicly accused us of sabotaging the meeting for having explained exactly this key question! This behavior by the IG was completely consistent with its history, since stumbling over the class line has been a defining characteristic of the IG from its beginnings. Its Brazilian comrades debuted in 1996 by dragging a union into the bourgeois courts—a class betrayal—as part of an intra-bureaucratic fight for control of the union...which was infested with cops! (See *Espartaco* No. 10, Autumn-Winter 1997 ["IG's Brazil Cover-Up: Dirty Hands, Cynical Lies," *WV* No. 671, 11 July 1997].)

The IG was by then inventing a *class* difference between these pro-PRD union bureaucracies and those that are tied to the PRI. The IG considers that the unions affiliated with the PRI are nothing more than "an arm of the bourgeois state" (*El Internacionalista*, March 2000). The IG's politics are not based on any Marxist analysis but rather are an accommodation to the anti-union prejudices dominant in the student body. Thus, according to the IG's convenient "analysis," the only genuine workers unions in the country are those tied *to the PRD*! But the class struggle does not appear to be particularly concerned with the IG's rulings. In fact, defying their right-wing leadership, entire sections of the powerful SUTERM, together with the pro-PRD unions and the CGH, called the enormous mobilization of 28 August 1999. Between the end of September and mid-October 1999, the sugar workers union, affiliated with the CTM [pro-PRI Mexican Labor Federation], carried out an economic strike, and a workers delegation came to the CGH to express its solidarity and donate tons of sugar for the student strikers to sweeten their coffee. In addition, for several years now, the miners union has been involved in the hardest class struggles against state interference and in defense of economic conquests. The IG has a ***union-busting*** line in the service of the bourgeois PRD and its lieutenants in the workers movement. With this spurious "justification," the IG in fact refuses to defend the PRI unions and their struggles against the state and the bosses—a class betrayal—because their leaderships support the wrong bourgeois party.

The Strike at an Impasse

After the retreat of the union bureaucracy, the bourgeois offensive against the strike became especially brutal and sinister. Besides the constant *porro* thug provocations, on October 5 "El Mosh" and our comrade Humberto Herrera, a union member with 20 years of experience at the time, were kidnapped and tortured for hours. In response, sections of our International Communist League held protests at Mexican embassies and consulates around the world demanding: "Defend the UNAM strike! Down with state terror against the left! For union strikes against privatizations and in defense of public education!" A few days later, on October 14, a CGH march on the Periférico beltway was brutally attacked by riot police. In spite of the brutal repression, the strikers were determined to continue with their struggle, as shown by the November 5 CGH march from Televisa San Angel to Los Pinos [the official residence and office of the president] via the Periférico, which had more than 100,000 participants and was surrounded by more than 15,000 cops.

Faced with growing criticism from the bourgeoisie over his inability to resolve the conflict, the chancellor, Francisco Barnés, tendered his resignation on November 12. This awakened new illusions within the CGH, and many strikers celebrated this "victory." The LTS was among the most enthusiastic, writing soon afterward:

> "The CGH, with its democratic organization and great methods of struggle (like the occupation of facilities and mobilizations like the ones on the Periférico), got rid of Barnés, the first great triumph of the strike."
>
> —*Estrategia Obrera* No. 11, January-February 2000

The LTS's glorification of the supposed "horizontal democracy" of the CGH and its "great methods of struggle" (the "powerful actions" of "El Mosh") show the total prostration of these pseudo-Trotskyists in the face of student militancy and their lack of a forward-looking perspective. Barnés's resignation was no triumph. In reality, the student strike had gone as far as it could as such, and in the face of the withdrawal of union support, it found itself at an impasse.

The Breaking of the Strike

The incompetent Barnés was soon replaced by a much more efficient politician, de la Fuente, who wasted no time before starting to pave the way for massive repression and the final breaking of the strike through his university "plebiscite" on the strike. With the support of the entire spectrum of the populist intelligentsia (including Elena Poniatowska, Carlos Monsiváis, and many other current members of [leading PRD politician] Andrés Manuel López Obrador's

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Mexico...

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top brass), de la Fuente mobilized bourgeois "public opinion" against the CGH, demanding the end of the strike in exchange for the promise of a "congress" and declaring that any "dialogue" was at an end until the strike was lifted. Nonetheless, En Lucha again misled the CGH into a renewed attempt at "dialogue" with the person who would, a few months later, facilitate the massive repression of the strike.

The CGH responded to de la Fuente's "plebiscite" with its own plebiscite in the middle of January, in which hundreds of thousands, within UNAM and outside it, declared their support for the CGH's demands. After the repression against the December 11 protest, there were several more attacks, including the police occupation of the Prepa 3 high school on February 1. The biggest blow was when the STUNAM bureaucracy postponed the strike scheduled for February 1, at a moment when it was clear that massive repression was coming. Finally, on February 6, the PFP [Federal Preventive Police] and the riot police—more than 2,000 in all—took over the main campus and broke the strike, with about 700 arrests. Putting a spotlight on repression in Mexico, the ICL again held protests around the world against the repression and for the immediate release of all those detained. We again called on STUNAM to flex its muscles in defense of the students through a strike. Letters of solidarity written as a result of our campaign arrived from important unions in South Africa and Italy, among others. We also organized an international fund drive to help the detained students make bail.

As we wrote in a 6 February 2000 ICL statement ["Free All Arrested UNAM Strikers! Defend Public Education!" *WV* No. 729, 11 February 2000]:

> "The government has bloodied and repressed the students because they think they can get away with it. The student strike has held out for many months and the students have fought valiantly. But student protest on its own is insufficient. To go beyond verbal protest and change society, students and all those seeking social justice must be anchored in the social and economic realities of the country and must mobilize the tremendous social power of the proletariat against the Mexican rulers and their imperialist overlords. We say: ***No new 1968 massacres! Mobilize the power of the working class! Forge a revolutionary Trotskyist party!***"

The history of the UNAM strike brings key lessons for social activists today. The illusions of the CGH leaders in the "democratization" of UNAM and their confidence in the authorities reflect the rejection of the need for the revolutionary reorganization of society. Only through the construction of a revolutionary workers party can a consistent struggle be waged for the interests of workers, women, indigenous people, peasants and all the oppressed. Any path other than the revolutionary one leads inevitably to cooptation by the PRD or some other bourgeois force and/or being crushed by the state. The purpose should not be to pressure the PRD and its numerous fellow travelers but to break with them; it is nationalist populism that prevents successful struggle by the working class and keeps it divided. To forge a revolutionary party that, in Lenin's words, acts as the "tribune of the people," the fight against all forms of oppression and backwardness is key. A constant feature of our intervention during the UNAM strike was the fight against students' enthusiastic acceptance of widespread discrimination and fanaticism. We constantly had to raise our voices against the sexist, homophobic and anti-Semitic epithets that echoed during the marches and assemblies of the strike.

Espartaco

SME Mexican electrical workers union march in August 1999. We fought to link student strike to social power of working class.

In the struggle against false bourgeois ideology, we Spartacists raise the declaration of Leon Trotsky: "Without a party, apart from a party, over the head of a party, or with a substitute for a party, the proletarian revolution cannot conquer" (*Lessons of October*, 1924). We emphasize that students have an important role to play: the revolutionary organization of the working class must unite the vanguard of the working class with *declassed* intellectuals who use their abilities and knowledge in the service of *proletarian emancipation*. Quoting James P. Cannon, the founder of Trotskyism in the United States, the Spartacist speaker concluded his remarks on 13 August 1999:

> "'Our party is a party of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. The proletarian revolution is the only solution to the problem of the working class, and all our work must lead to that goal.' Such is the basis of Spartacist politics. Break with the bourgeoisie! No illusions in the bourgeois PRD! Forge an international Leninist-Trotskyist party! For new October Revolutions around the world!"■

Poland...

(continued from page 3)

oppression have been eliminated once and for all. Fascism, defined by ultranationalism, is a form of *capitalist* rule in extremis: when it feels its power and profits sufficiently threatened by an insurgent proletariat, the bourgeoisie finances the mobilization of enraged petty-bourgeois and lumpen mobs to crush the workers movement under the iron heel of genocidal social reaction. Fear and hatred of Communism has always been a central pillar of fascist ideology. For example, Hitlerite Germany's 1936 agreement with the Japanese militarists was called the "Anti-Comintern Pact."

The truth of the matter is that the anti-communists who today denounce "totalitarianism" by and large stood *with the Nazis* against "Jew-Bolshevism." Baltic nationalists openly declare themselves to be the heirs of the likes of the Estonian Forest Brothers, who abetted the Nazi Holocaust of millions of Jews, Roma and Soviet citizens. And the architects of Polish Solidarność, which spearheaded the drive for capitalist restoration throughout the Soviet bloc, drew inspiration from nationalist, anti-Communist antecedents such as interwar dictator Jozef Pilsudksi, who presided over a panoply of discriminatory measures against Jews, and the virulently chauvinist, overtly anti-Semitic National Democrats (Endeks).

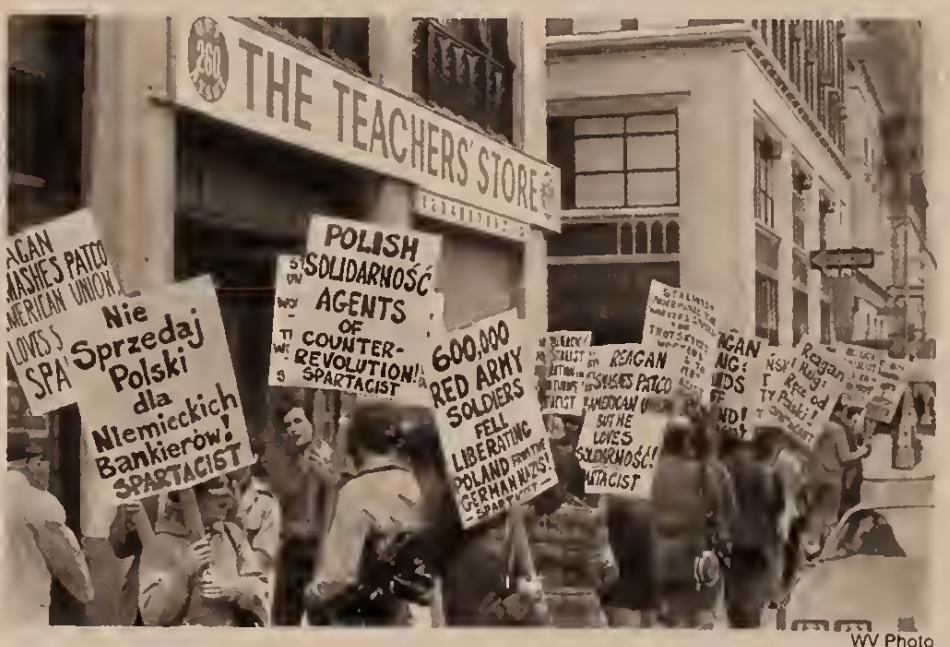
While many Polish workers courageously opposed anti-Semitism as a tool of bourgeois reaction, the vast majority of Polish nationalists not only did nothing to fight against the Nazi "final solution" but, as with the Endeks, actually welcomed it, joining in pogroms of Jews both before and after Poland's liberation by the Soviet Army. In 1991, Prime Minister Jan Krzysztof Bielecki, a former Solidarność activist, declaimed that "45 years of communism had caused more damage to Poland than the Nazi occupation." (This beneficiary of "reborn" Polish capitalism is also known for saying: "The first million has to be stolen.") To Bielecki and his ilk, the slaughter of three million Polish Jews (as well as Roma and nearly three million other Poles), whose numbers included a large and vibrant component of the multiethnic revolutionary workers movement, was not at all "damaging."

In conjuring up allegations of tens of millions of victims of Communism, Polish reactionaries take a page from *The Black Book of Communism* published in France in 1997, which in turn borrowed not a little from the demented ravings of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. Stéphane Courtois, the editor of the *Black Book*, railed in his introduction that "a single-minded focus on the Jewish genocide in an attempt to characterize the Holocaust as a unique atrocity has also prevented an assessment of other episodes of comparable magnitude in the Communist world."

Echoing this disgusting filth, the European Parliament last year proclaimed August 23, the anniversary of the 1939 pact between Hitler and Stalin that preceded the Nazi invasion of Poland and led to its division into German- and Soviet-dominated areas, as a "Europe-wide Remembrance Day for the victims of all totalitarian and authoritarian regimes." In fact, the roles played by Germany and the Soviet Union in Poland in 1939-41 only underlined the profoundly different class foundations of the two countries. While the Soviet forces in eastern Poland encouraged the expropriation of the capitalists and large landowners, the Nazis in western Poland erected concentration camps for leftist workers and intellectuals and corraled the Jews into ghettos. As Leon Trotsky succinctly noted in a January 1940 article directed against a "Third Camp" opposition led by Max Shachtman that had reneged on defense of the Soviet Union, "Why was it chiefly revolutionists, 'democrats,' and Jews who fled from there [Nazi-occupied Poland], while in eastern Poland–it was chiefly the landlords and capitalists who fled?" (Trotsky, "From a Scratch to the Danger of Gangrene," *In Defense of Marxism*).

From the standpoint of proletarian internationalism, a diplomatic agreement with German imperialism was no different in principle from Stalin's earlier, and later, agreements with the "democratic" imperialists of France, Britain and the U.S. The real crime of the Stalin regime was its *conciliation* of imperialism in the name of building "socialism in one country," which meant betraying proletarian revolution, as in Spain and France in the mid 1930s. Stalin's beheading of the Red Army in the bloody purges of the late 1930s served to critically undermine the military defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state when Hitler's armies invaded in June 1941. But, despite Stalin, the Red Army went on to smash Nazi Germany. Genuine Bolsheviks, including the Polish Trotskyists who went to their deaths in the Warsaw Ghetto, fought for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union while opposing all the imperialist combatants, including the "democratic" Allied powers, for whom World War II was a struggle for redivision of colonies and spheres of exploitation. And we honor the 600,000 Soviet soldiers who died liberating Poland from the Nazi scourge.

From Walesa to Kaczyński, Solidarność and its heirs have always made an anti-Soviet cause célèbre of the 1940 Katyn massacre of Polish military officers near Smolensk, Russia. As we wrote in a 1981 article in *Workers Vanguard*: "Revolutionary Marxists do not support the indiscriminate killing of the bourgeois officer caste any more than that of factory owners or bourgeois politicians. (Those personally responsible for crimes and atrocities against the working masses are another matter; they will



WV Photo

New York, September 1981: Spartacists demonstrate in front of Solidarność office at teachers union headquarters, exposing Solidarność as company union for CIA, Vatican and Wall Street.

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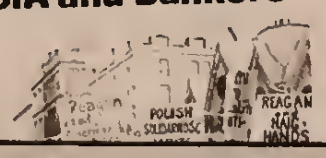
Solidarność: Polish Company Union for CIA and Bankers



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„Solidarność": żółty „związek zawodowy" na rzecz CIA i bankierów

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certainly be subject to revolutionary justice.) *Nevertheless, Katyn is not a crime agoinst the Polish working people.* These were the military officers of a fascistic, anti-Semitic dictatorship which regularly butchered workers and even bourgeois dissidents" ("Pilsudski and Counterrevolution in Poland," *WV* No. 293, 20 November 1981).

Anti-Communism and anti-Semitism were part and parcel of Polish nationalism from well before the Hitler-Stalin pact. Almost from the moment of its birth in December 1918, the Polish Communist Party was banned in "independent" capitalist Poland (which was in fact utterly dependent on French and British imperialism). Throughout the party's existence, until its dissolution by Stalin in 1938, the heroic Polish Communists who fought underground for the cause of the proletariat were subjected to imprisonment, torture and murder. Against nationalists of all stripes, we proclaim the historic slogan of the Communist International of Lenin and Trotsky: *For the revolutionory unity of the Polish, Russion ond Germon proletoriot!*

Anti-Communism: Spearhead of Social Reaction

The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Polish deformed workers state and the restoration of capitalist class rule in 1989-90 ushered in widespread unemployment and immiseration and the intrusion of anti-Semitic and anti-woman Catholic reaction into every sphere of society. Millions of women were driven out of social production and forced back into the stifling confines of the kitchen. The unconditional right to abortion was overturned; day-care facilities for children were eliminated; secular education and the separation of church and state were demolished as crucifixes and religious instruction were imposed on schools. For large numbers of working people, the "magic of the market" meant emigrating abroad in an attempt to secure some sort of livelihood.

Anti-communism goes hand in hand with broader social reaction. This is exemplified by the fact that the current anti-communist ban is linked to measures aimed against pornography, sexual activity involving youth under the age of 15 and other such "crimes without victims." These measures are linked to a vile witchhunt targeting the right of adults and youth to engage in mutually consensual sexual relations, with the Polish bourgeoisie screaming for pedophiles to be imprisoned and "chemically castrated." We are against any government intrusion into consensual sexual relationships. *Down with the criminalizotion of pedophilia! Down with the reoctionory concept of "oge of consent"! Priests, caps ond prosecutors out of the bedraam! For the unrestricted right to abortion—Free obortion on demand!*

The proposed ban on communist symbols would generalize and legitimize the reactionary vendetta that has been a hallmark of capitalist restoration in Poland. The right wing continues to pursue a witchhunt against the former Stalinist officials of the People's Republic of Poland. Earlier this year, the government cut pensions for former employees of the old state security apparatus, including even office cleaners and clerks. Wojciech Jaruzelski, who stood at the head of the Stalinist regime that suppressed a counterrevolutionary bid for power by Solidarność in December 1981, is again on trial on criminal charges. Former ZOMO anti-riot police last year received prison sentences of up to six years for the shooting deaths of nine miners in Katowice during the 1981 state of emergency.

Fidrych/Agencja Gazeta

Walbrzych, Poland: Unemployed men risk their lives to scrounge for coal.

Jaruzelski is being tried by the wrong class for the wrong crimes. For proletarian revolutionaries, the suppression of Solidarność counterrevolution was no crime. From the moment Solidarność consolidated around an open program of capitalist restoration at its first national congress in September 1981, we Trotskyists declared: Stop Solidarność counterrevolution! (see Spartacist pamphlet, *Salidarność: Polish Company Union for CIA and Bankers*). In this we were opposed by an alliance ranging from the Vatican and the CIA to the German Social Democracy (SPD), the New York City teachers union of Albert Shanker and Yetta Barshevsky (Max Shachtman's widow) and the bulk of the fake-Trotskyist left. We fought for a proletarian political revolution to replace Stalinist misrule with the rule of democratically elected workers soviets committed to a perspective of international proletarian revolution. We condemned the Polish Stalinist bureaucracy for its betrayals, for its nationalism and conciliation of imperialism abroad and the church at home, for its lies and bureaucratism, which ultimately drove much of the historically pro-socialist proletariat into the arms of clerical reaction in 1980-81. Then in 1989-90, the Stalinists sold out the deformed workers state to Solidarność and its imperialist backers. We say: *Hands off Joruzelski and other former Stolinist officials!*

In a creditable protest against the anti-communist ban posted on its Web site (www.kompol.org, 26 September 2009), the Communist Party of Poland (KPP) stated: "We strongly oppose efforts to equate fascism—which, based on racism, led to the bloodiest war in history thanks to the implementation of a plan to exterminate millions of people—with communism, which is built on the principles of social justice, and which defeated the genocidal fascists thanks to the utter dedication to struggle and sacrifice of countless millions of men, women and children. Despite even the most brutal repression we will not stop in our struggle for the victory of socialism, nor turn from the road to a victorious communist destiny!"

Der Spiegel

1945: Poles greet Soviet Red Army troops following liberation of Poland from Nazi scourge.

But what the KPP means by "communism" is not the proletarian internationalism of Marx and Engels and the Bolsheviks but its nationalist antithesis, codified in the Stalinist dogma of "socialism in one country." In their own ways, the SLD and the KPP are both decomposition products of the former Stalinist bureaucracy and its sham "people's democracy." Where the SLD exalts (capitalist) "democracy," the KPP glorifies Stalin.

Unlike reformists and liberals, we do not call on the bourgeois state to ban the fascists. Such calls, premised on illusions in the good offices of bourgeois democracy, will inevitably be used against the left and the workers movement, which is the main target of capitalist state repression. For instance, a law criminalizing a fascist group in West Germany in the early 1950s was used a few years later to ban the Communist Party there. And a recent Czech court ruling banning the fascist "Workers Party" is now providing further ammunition to those who want to ban the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia. We look to the mobilization of the proletariat, standing at the head of all the potential victims of fascist terror, to sweep the fascists off the streets.

While the class rule of the bourgeoisie is not threatened right now, the world recession underlines the truth of Marx's analysis that capitalism is a crisis-ridden system. The right-wing parties governing Poland have been in power for a number of years. But Poland is hardly a stable bourgeois democracy, and though socialist revolution is not imminent, this decadent, third-rate bourgeoisie has good cause to fear a reawakening of the once pro-socialist Polish proletariat. Notwithstanding that sections of the working class had been intoxicated by clerical-nationalist Solidarność, when the first Solidarność government tried to implement its "free market" attacks on the working class in 1990 it was met by a wave of strikes and was soon replaced by a government led by the social-democratic SLD. Even now, despite 20 years of official anti-Communist hysteria in every sphere of public life, half the population continues to support the December 1981 state of emergency imposed by Jaruzelski. "God, Honor and Fatherland," the watchwords of Polish reaction, ring hollow to a generation of youth raised amid the glorification of capitalist greed and fawning capitulation to the NATO imperialists.

Those looking for a way out of the stultifying dead end of this decaying capitalist order will find it in the authentic communism of the Three L's—V. I. Lenin, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. As the 1990 founding statement of the Spartacist Group of Poland, section of the International Communist League, stated (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 45-46, Winter 1990-91):

> "A Trotskyist party must be a tribune of the people, championing all victims of oppression. The drive to restore capitalism revives and intensifies all the 'old crap' of the prewar social order, from reactionary clericalism to Pilsudskiite nationalism and anti-Semitism....
>
> "Polish Trotskyists must seek to reclaim the best traditions of the Polish workers movement, forged in the struggle against national chauvinism. This is exemplified by Rosa Luxemburg, a Polish Jewish communist and leader of the revolutionary German proletariat. Reviling Luxemburg for her internationalism, Stalin never trusted and finally liquidated the Polish CP, which was the first to come to the defense of comrade Trotsky by asserting in 1923 that 'the name of Comrade Trotsky is insolubly connected with the victory of the Soviet Revolution, with the Red Army, with communism'."

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Immigration...

(continued from page 1)

passage of the new law, in anti-immigrant raids carried out by Obama's Department of Homeland Security (now headed by former Arizona governor Janet Napolitano). With helicopters buzzing overhead, up to 800 agents from the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.) and other police agencies, some in black hoods, launched a military-style attack on shuttle van businesses that transport immigrant workers in Phoenix, Tucson, Rio Rico and Nogales. Heralded as the biggest smuggling bust in the I.C.E.'s history, these raids provide a chilling snapshot of the Democrats' program for "immigration reform."

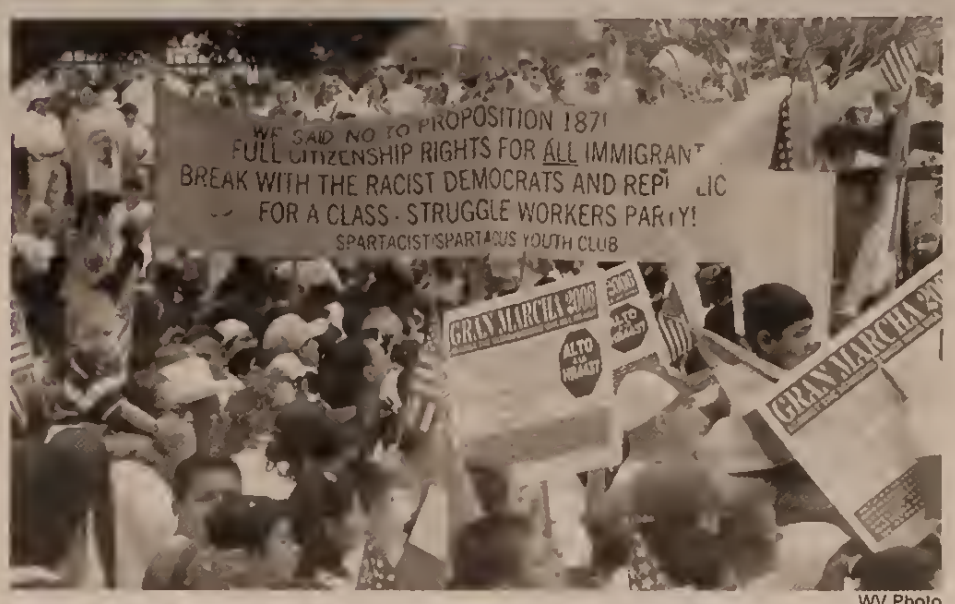
As described in a *Washington Post* (1 May) article: "The Democrats' legislative 'framework' includes a slew of new immigration enforcement measures aimed at U.S. borders and workplaces. It would further expand the 20,000-member Border Patrol; triple fines against U.S. employers who hire illegal immigrants; and, most controversially, require all American workers—citizens and noncitizens alike—to get new Social Security cards linked to their fingerprints to ease checks of their work eligibility." Obama promised to "open a pathway to citizenship" for the more than eleven million undocumented immigrants in this country. What this means is seen in the current Democratic proposal that these desperately impoverished workers turn themselves in as "lawbreakers," pay heavy fines and back taxes, pass background checks and be proficient in English. Even then they would be granted only a provisional status for eight years.

This has not shaken the reformists' illusions in Obama as "change" they can "believe in." As usual, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) takes second place to no one on this score. A 30 April article in its press, *Socialist Worker*, opines: "A conversation about really progressive immigration reform needs to start by strategizing about how to stop the Arizona scare, and how to force Obama, who repeatedly has recognized that the system is broken, to stop deportations"! This, they argue, "can buy time for the movement to push for legislation...that puts the interests of the entire working class, immigrant and native-born alike, up front."

The hard truth is that the capitalist system is based on the brutal exploitation of all labor, with the ruling class inflaming racial and ethnic hostilities to keep the working class divided and thus ensure a greater extraction of profit. Just as immigrant workers are brought in during economic boom times to provide a pool of low-wage labor, the current rise in anti-immigrant attacks worldwide is exacerbated by the global economic crisis and its attendant soaring unemployment. As we wrote in the International Communist League's "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998):

> "Modern capitalism, i.e., imperialism, reaching into all areas of the planet, in the course of the class struggle and as economic need demands, brings into the proletariat at its bottom new sources of cheaper labor, principally immigrants from poorer and less-developed regions of the world—workers with few rights who are deemed more disposable in times of economic contraction. Thus capitalism in ongoing fashion creates different strata among the workers, while simultaneously amalgamating the workers of many different lands. Everywhere, the capitalists, abetted by aristocracy-of-labor opportunists, try to poison class consciousness and solidarity among the workers by fomenting religious, national and ethnic divisions. The struggle for the unity and integrity of the working class against chauvinism and racism is thus a vital task for the proletarian vanguard."

We do not seek to tinker with the capitalist system by advising the bourgeoisie to take up an alternative immigration policy. We call for ***full citizenship rights for all immigrants*** as part of our struggle to advance the class consciousness and solidarity of the multiracial working class, preparing it for the necessary revolutionary battle to end capitalist class rule. A real fight for immigrant rights in this country will only begin when the workers—white, black, Latino and others—struggle based on their common interests as a class. This means opposition to all the political parties and state agencies of the capitalist class. Unlocking the social power of the multiracial working class will take a political fight against the current pro-capitalist misleaders of labor who have shackled the working class to their exploiters, particularly through support for the Democratic Party.



WV Photo

Spartacist banner at Los Angeles demonstration for immigrant rights, March 2006.

Labor Lieutenants of the Capitalist Class

Many of the 1.8 million members of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) are immigrants, and many of these have waged militant struggles to organize unions. But their interests are betrayed by the union leaders. A statement on Arizona's anti-immigrant law by Eliseo Medina, executive vice president of the SEIU, declared:

> "This radical anti-immigration law should be a wake-up call to Congress and the White House. Immigration is a national problem that needs a national solution.... We need immigration policies that will eliminate the underground economy by getting undocumented immigrants into the system, paying fines, back taxes, learning English and getting on local, state and federal tax rolls. We need reform that will truly end illegal immigration and hold bad-actor employers responsible for depressing wages and violating the right to a safe worksite for all workers."

Likewise, AFL-CIO president Richard Trumka's statement in opposition to the Arizona law demanded that "our focus should instead be on a comprehensive solution to the broken immigration system."

Last year, the SEIU's "Change to Win" union federation and the AFL-CIO issued a joint statement for "comprehensive immigration reform." Embracing the government's campaign against undocumented workers, these labor traitors seek only to tinker with its methods of repression. To regulate immigration, their "unified framework" called for "an independent commission to assess and manage future flows" of immigrant workers, leaving open the possibility of their own participation on such a commission as the labor police for the capitalist state. It also demanded more "rational operational control of the border" and a "secure and effective worker authorization mechanism."

Since coming to power, bankrolled by millions in contributions from the labor tops, the Obama administration has expanded such "worker authorization mechanisms" as the E-Verify program, which is aimed at confirming the legal status of workers through checking their Social Security numbers against government databases. At one workplace after another, mass firings of immigrant workers have followed such audits. Last year, 254 workers, mostly women, at the food processing plant Overhill Farms and another 1,500 at clothing maker American Apparel, both in the Los Angeles area, were driven out of their jobs after these so-called "desktop raids." The Obama administration boasts that in its first year it deported a record number of "illegals."

Such raids are an open invitation to get rid of union activists and other "troublemakers." In 2006, the bosses at Smithfield's pork processing plant in Tar Heel, North Carolina, tried to stop a fight for union recognition by firing 75 "no match" workers. A two-day walkout that included black and white workers as well as Latinos forced the company to rehire everyone. The workers won their union in late 2008, but by that time I.C.E. workplace raids had driven out a significant number of the immigrant workers.

The battle at Smithfield underlines the need for a mass, militant union organizing drive throughout the country and particularly in the open shop South. Only 6.5 percent of workers in Arizona, a notorious "right-to-work" state, are organized. Now, in response to the new anti-immigrant law, an article in the *Phoenix Business Journal* (30 April) reports that SEIU union representatives "say they are seeing a surge in inquiries from Hispanic workers in Arizona worried about the new law and the potential for more police raids and inquiries into their workplaces." Enlisting immigrant workers—many of whom have a history of militant struggle in their own countries—in the front ranks of the labor movement is an urgent task both to fight the exploitation of the most vulnerable layers of the population and to bust the government's anti-union laws. This in turn could reverse the decades-long decline of the trade unions in this country. Rather than defending the working class as a whole or even members of their own unions, the union bureaucracy embraces the "national" interests of the U.S. capitalist rulers as its own.

The Democrats' "immigration reform" plans include the institution of a national biometric identity card for everyone in the United States. This will increase the police-state powers and repressive apparatus of the capitalist state, which have already been vastly augmented under the so-called "war on terror." Under the Transportation Workers Identity Credential (TWIC) program, such biometric ID cards have already been mandated for hundreds of thousands of workers at the ports. To qualify for a TWIC card, all port workers had to submit to extensive criminal background and immigration checks. For black and Latino port workers, who have been particularly targeted under the racist "war on drugs," even applying for the card meant running the risk of possible deportation or being pursued as some kind of "fugitive from justice." The applications of tens of thousands of port workers were rejected, although some eventually won their cases on appeal. An unknown number of longshore and other port workers are permanently gone, branded as a threat to "national security" for trivial offenses like drug possession with "intent" to distribute, or just being an "illegal" immigrant.

Rather than fighting this "anti-terror" law, the response of the leaders of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union—which is still widely seen as a bastion of labor power and militancy—was to call for a more expedient and "fair" implementation of the TWIC program! As we wrote in "'War on Terror'

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Crackdown on the Docks" (*WV* No. 936, 8 May 2009):

> "For the ILWU and other longshore unions to wage a real fight against TWIC and the racist, union-busting 'war on terror' laws, the obvious starting point must be ***opposition*** to the very state that is enforcing these laws. It means championing full citizenship rights for all immigrants and fighting to organize foreign-born workers.... In a country built on the subjugation of black people, where racist reaction has long served to ratchet up the exploitation of the working class as a whole, the fight for black freedom is directly linked to the fight to break the chains of capitalist wage slavery and the state forces and laws that maintain it. But to wage that kind of struggle, the unions must be led by a different kind of leadership, one rooted in a program of class struggle, as opposed to the present misleaders whose policies of class collaboration increasingly subordinate the unions to the capitalist state."

When the ILWU embraces TWIC, making itself an auxiliary to the racist crackdown on the port truckers; when the auto unions lobby for the bosses' bailout schemes, pledging to lower the cost of union labor to rival the depressed wages and rotten conditions in non-union plants; when the powerful Teamsters union pleads that "unsafe" Mexican truckers should be barred from America's highways: the conservative bureaucrats are lining up against the basic class interests of the international proletariat. Their highest loyalty is to capitalist profitability on behalf of their own racist ruling class, whose benefits are supposed to "trickle down." This means pitting workers against one another in competition for crumbs and increasing poverty and unemployment, especially for the most vulnerable social layers.

Black Rights and Immigrant Rights

Calls for an economic boycott of Arizona have come from a variety of Democratic Party politicians, ranging from the San Francisco city government to New York's Al Sharpton, with the reformist left, such as Workers World Party, bringing up the rear with the demand that capitalist investors and businesses "divest from the apartheid-like police state!" The last time there were appeals for such a boycott was in response to the refusal of the Arizona state administration to recognize Martin Luther King's birthday as an official holiday. That refusal, together with the state's apartheid-style, anti-immigration law, captures something of the history of Arizona. This history is in turn emblematic of the racial oppression of blacks and anti-immigrant reaction that are central to the maintenance of American capitalism.

Until the Mexican-American War of 1846-48, Arizona like most of the Southwest was part of Mexico. It was in large measure the Southern slavocracy's drive to extend slavery that motivated the invasion of Mexico, which resulted in the U.S. stealing half of Mexico's territory. Today, Latinos—largely Mexicans and Mexican Americans—make up more than 30 percent of the state's population. Although black people are a mere 4.2 percent of Arizona's population, the state has long been a bastion of anti-black racism. Barry Goldwater, five-term Arizona Senator and Republican candidate for president in 1964, voted against the 1964 Civil Rights Act. For decades Goldwater was an icon of a right-wing backlash against black rights, unions and any and all social welfare programs. In the past decade, Arizona has been on the cutting edge of anti-immigrant reaction, spawning vigilante Minuteman militias to patrol the borders against "illegals."

Now, Sharpton—a political hustler who mobilized against Korean-owned grocery stores in Brooklyn before he became a more "respectable" Democratic Party politician—bombastically declares "we will bring Freedom Walkers to Arizona just like Freedom Riders went to the deep south 50 years ago" (*New York Daily News*, 26 April). The courageous civil rights struggles of the 1960s led to the elimination of formal Jim Crow segregation in the South. But the promise of black freedom was betrayed by the leaders of the civil rights movement, who tied their fortunes to the Democratic Party and were bought off for token concessions and a few "black faces in high places." Today, Sharpton's invocation of these heroic freedom riders is aimed at enforcing the rule of racist American capitalism in its Democratic Party face.

Lenny Ignelzi

Obama's Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano at Southern California's Otay Mesa port of entry, April 2009.

A keynote speaker at the 50,000-strong immigrant rights protest in Los Angeles on May Day was the city's Latino Democratic Party mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. A sign read "We Latinos Are the Jews of the 21st Century." Only two weeks earlier, a gang of Hitler-loving Nazis staged an anti-immigrant, race-hate rally in Los Angeles to "Reclaim the Southwest." They were protected by hundreds of L.A. cops, mobilized by the mayor's office, against a protest by about a thousand anti-fascists. The trade-union misleaders, in a city where immigrant workers have been in the forefront of union organizing over the past two decades, turned a blind eye to this deadly fascist provocation. The fascists should have been stopped by a militant mass mobilization of working people and oppressed led by the labor movement. Labor's inaction spelled an unqualified defeat for the working class, the bitter fruit of the labor bureaucracy's allegiance to the Democratic Party.

The working class needs its own party, a multiracial revolutionary workers party. It is the purpose of the Spartacist League/U.S. to forge such a party, which, through education and in the course of sharp class struggle, can make the working class conscious not only of its social power but also of its historic interest as the gravedigger of the vicious and depraved rule of capitalist imperialism. Crucial to building such a party in the U.S. is the understanding of the inextricable link between the fight for labor's emancipation, the defense of immigrant rights and the cause of black freedom. When the wealth of this country is in the hands of the working class that produced it, we will begin the construction of a socialist planned economy which will provide the material basis for the eradication of black oppression. Grounded in a program of revolutionary internationalism, a workers government will begin to right the historical crimes of U.S. imperialism, for example by returning to Mexico the predominantly Spanish-speaking areas along the border. Such a gesture would be the sharpest possible repudiation of the social-patriotic politics of the present American labor movement and a concrete demonstration of the internationalist program to smash the imperialist world order.

As we wrote in a 2006 joint declaration of the SL/U.S. and our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México (GEM), written to intervene into the mass immigrant rights demonstrations held that year: "The multiracial U.S. working class is potentially the most powerful ally of Mexican workers. The SL/U.S. and the GEM are dedicated to forging revolutionary workers parties on both sides of the border as part of the fight to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution." ■

South Africa...

(continued from page 12)

prevailing circumstances to further their own privileges and bourgeois-nationalist political careers. In fact, the victims of nationalists chanting such slogans as "kill the boer" are the farm workers, who face immediate retribution from their "boer" employers. Also, the most likely to suffer as a result of the "narrow nationalism" which Malema and his ilk promote are immigrants from other African countries.

One of the main factors contributing to the untenable relations on the farms is the failure of the land redistribution program of the bourgeois ANC/SACP/COSATU government, which is based on a "willing seller, willing buyer" arrangement. Less than 6 percent of the land has been transferred back to black people, while the white minority, which forms less than 10 percent of the population, owns more than 70 percent of the country's urban and arable rural land. In line with their commitment to capitalist relations of private property, most black nationalist organisations call for allocation of more land to small farm owners. In counterposition to this program of breaking up large, mechanised commercial farms into smaller, unproductive pieces, we are for the expropriation of the large, white-owned farms and for their transformation into collective and state farms under workers rule. Farm workers are going to be central in achieving this goal, which is indissolubly bound up with the socialist revolution to be led by the mainly urban proletariat. To address the lack of housing and related problems, we stand for the expropriation without compensation of all privately owned urban land and the building of racially integrated residential areas as part of a massive public works program.

Problems of poverty facing the majority of the South African black population extend beyond the farm environment, as South Africa overtakes Brazil as one of the most unequal societies in the world. They are currently expressed in the rebellious township service delivery protests that are spreading like wildfire throughout the country. The masses' frustrations over the lack of satisfaction of very basic human needs like electricity, water, houses, roads, etc. are met by state violence with cops firing rubber bullets at and arresting tens and tens of protesters.

Students from poor backgrounds are struggling against financial exclusion from institutions of higher education. Currently thousands of members of the National Union of Mineworkers are on strike against pending retrenchments [layoffs] and for recovery of at least two months' worth of unpaid salaries in the provinces of Gauteng and North West. These workers are employed by Aurora, a "black empowerment" mining company run by the relatives of former and current presidents Nelson Mandela and Jacob Zuma. These black exploiters were also trying to buy more mines in Zimbabwe. So it is clear that the ruling Tripartite Alliance elite have direct interests in the continued superexploitation of black labour that the "new" South Africa shares with its apartheid predecessor.

Writing in the *City Press* (11 April), Andile Mngxitama, a representative of Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) nationalism, effectively captured the reality of black oppression in the "new" South Africa as revealed in the light of Terre'Blanche's death:

> "Ventersdorp is South Africa.... This dorpie [small town] eloquently tells the story of the criminal neglect of black people by the ANC government in the past 16 years. Go see for yourself the demeanour of black residents. They are tense and fearful, a powerful symbol of black powerlessness, because the ruling party has made a pact with the devil."

But Mngxitama's conclusions reveal the bankruptcy of BCM's brand of nationalism, no less than that of the mainstream ANC, by pushing illusions that solutions to the problems facing the oppressed majority can be realised by pressuring the ANC: "It must simply use its political power to change things. The problem is not the white racists, but the refusal of the ANC to use its political mandate to end racism." This is no surprise, as Mngxitama wastes a lot of ink in his bourgeois press articles telling black people they are oppressed, which they already know, while his only proposals for what to *do* about this oppression are for blacks to overcome an oppressed "state of mind."

We of Spartacist South Africa, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), remain steadfast in our conviction that the economic and social emancipation of the black majority can only be achieved through a proletarian socialist revolution and the creation of a black-centred workers government as a link in the chain of world socialist revolution. This is the South Africa-specific application of Leon Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution and a central lesson of the epoch-making Russian Revolution of October 1917. ■

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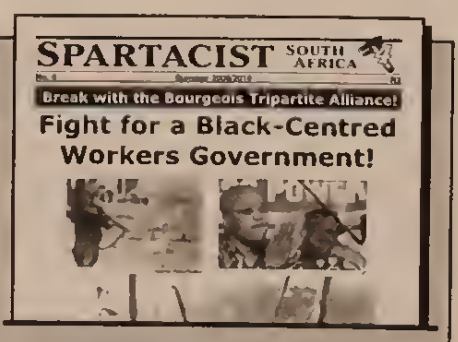

In South Africa:
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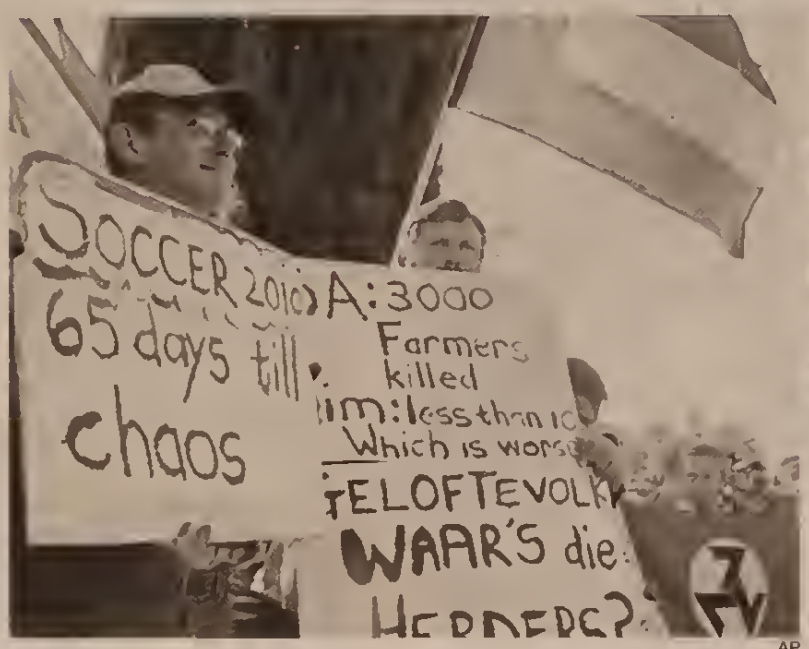
WORKERS VANGUARD

On the Killing of Fascist Terre'Blanche

Black Oppression in Neo-Apartheid South Africa



AP

Reuters

Ventersdorp, South Africa, April 6: Outside the court where farm workers accused of killing Terre'Blanche were to appear, white racists threatened retribution while black protesters expressed solidarity with the defendants.

For a Black-Centered Workers Government!

The following article was written by our comrades of Spartacist South Africa.

JOHANNESBURG—The killing of Eugene Terre'Blanche, leader of the white-supremacist, fascist Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (Afrikaner Resistance Movement—AWB), allegedly by his two black employees, including a 15-year-old, has raised black-vs.-white racial tensions to a level not seen at least since the killing of Chris Hani, a leader of the South African Communist Party (SACP), in 1993. The Saturday, 3 April killing happened at Terre'Blanche's Ventersdorp, North West Province, farm as a result of a dispute over unpaid wages, as low as R300.00 [$40] per month, owed to the two workers. The older of the workers, 28 years old, says they acted in self-defence.

The reactions from right-wing Afrikaner racists, the mainly white bourgeoisie, its mouthpieces in the bourgeois media and the tops of the ruling capitalist Tripartite Alliance—the African National Congress (ANC), SACP and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)—ranged from anger and threats of revenge to condemnation of the killing and eulogising Terre'Blanche in the name of "calm." (The government is particularly worried about bad international press with the World Cup looming.) To this end, President Jacob Zuma appeared on TV the night after the killing, grotesquely mourning the death of "a leader of his standing." Zuma's partner in the nationalist popular front, the reformist SACP, echoed his calls for "calm" and expressed "regret and shock" over the killing in a wretched 5 April statement, "Our Condolences to the Terreblanche Family."

In contrast, most of the black masses received the death of this white-supremacist with joy and relief, but also fear over a backlash by racist farmers and other whites. Unlike the SACP, which denounces the accused farm workers as murderers and calls on "their own" capitalist government to "act swiftly" in meting out punishment, we stand for the right of farm workers and other workers to self-defence, which is a question of survival given the racist attacks regularly carried out by their bosses. ***Free the accused! Drop all the charges!***

This racial polarisation shows the total bankruptcy of the ANC/SACP/COSATU project of "nation building" and exposes as a rotten sham their rhetoric about the "rainbow nation" and "non-racialism."

A very small, mainly farm-owning section of the predominantly Afrikaans-speaking white population rejected the 1994 "power sharing" deal between the Tripartite Alliance led by Nelson Mandela's ANC and the white minority government of F.W. De Klerk's National Party. They opted to fight for a whites-only republic where they can exercise self-rule within majority-black South Africa. This is the program of Terre'-Blanche's AWB. These racist farm owners not only refused the 1994 political deal but have also refused to implement laws meant to ameliorate the slave-like conditions of black workers on those farms. These workers are denied rights to join unions or even vote. When they are dead, the farmers refuse their families permission to bury them on the farms they have worked all their lives in case those graves are used as evidence for future land claims. Often existing graves are willfully destroyed by these deranged racists. More than a million farm workers have been evicted from the farms with total impunity since the dawn of neo-apartheid capitalist South Africa in 1994.

Other atrocities farm workers are subjected to include getting shot for being "mistaken" for dogs, baboons and warthogs; being dragged behind vans on concrete roads with pieces of flesh plucking off; being thrown alive into a lion's den; the list never stops. The week following the death of Terre'-Blanche saw seven farm workers' heads cracked by their employer with an iron rod in revenge for the killing simply because they are black. Outside Ventersdorp, a young black woman was brutally raped—to avenge the killing—by her employer, Henning Buys, who only paid R1,000.00 for bail and left without his blood samples being taken by the local police. Black farm workers' lives continue to be living hell in the master-slave relationships with their employers in 16 years of the "new" South Africa.

The response of both blacks and whites showed a country characterised by such deep racial divisions that even the death of a leader of such a fringe racist white organisation like the AWB can lead to fears of an imminent racial war. The leaders of the AWB and other white organisations blamed the ANC Youth League leader, Julius Malema, for fuelling racial tensions by singing the old anti-apartheid struggle song with the lyrics "kill the boer." ["Boer" is Afrikaans for "farmer." It is also used to refer to Afrikaners in general.] Both the SACP and COSATU tops condemned the killing, labeling it as criminal irrespective of what they know about the conditions of farm workers, which they only offered as a secondary comment. Both organisations blamed Terre'-Blanche for opposing democracy and reconciliation. So they see their priority as defending the neo-apartheid capitalism they help administer and which perpetuates the immiseration of the black masses.

It is this continued immiseration of the black masses and the explosive anger at the base of society that explain the racial polarisation, whatever slogan Malema chants. Nationalist demagogues like Malema do take advantage of such

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Lushaba/The Star

April 7, Springs, Johannesburg: Police fire rubber bullets at protesting workers of Grootvlei mine, owned by "black empowerment" firm Aurora.

WORKERS VANGUARD 50¢

No. 959 GCU C-701 21 May 2010

Greece: Down With PASOK Government's "Stability Program"!

AFP

Athens: Tens of thousands protest against government austerity program during May 5 general strike.

Forge a Multiethnic Revolutionary Workers Party!

For a Socialist United States of Europe!

As part of an economic bailout package introduced by Greece's European Union (EU) partners and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Greek prime minister George Papandreou has announced a new round of brutal attacks on the standard of living of that country's working population. The austerity measures imposed by Papandreou's Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) government include slashing public sector wages by 14 percent, cutting average pension benefits by 11 percent, raising the average retirement age by four years and jacking up the sales tax to 23 percent. Despite its name, PASOK is a capitalist party whose policies differ little from those of the right-wing New Democracy, which has alternated with PASOK as the ruling party of Greece but was voted out in the elections of October 2009.

These all-sided capitalist attacks would be devastating to the living standards of the Greek masses, particularly the most vulnerable sectors, such as the poor, elderly and women. But thus far they have been met with stiff resistance by the country's combative working class.

As their part of the bailout deal, the EU and IMF committed an unprecedented sum—almost $1 trillion—for loans to Greece, and potentially other heavily indebted EU countries like Portugal and Spain, to help them cover their budget deficits and refinance their debt. After months of blocking every proposal, the German government finally joined with other EU powers to seal the deal after growing fears of a possible default by Greece, Spain and Portugal raised the spectre of a renewed, full-blown financial crisis in Europe. Greece's economic woes occur against the backdrop of the international economic crisis, which has also exposed the seething national antagonisms heneath the surface of European capitalist "unity" as embodied in the EU and the euro. In Europe, as elsewhere, each national ruling class is seeking to ratchet up the exploitation of its own working class, while simultaneously maneuvering to gain the advantage against its rivals.

The PASOK government's string of anti-working-class attacks has provoked a wave of militant strikes, including four one-day general strikes so far this year, with a fifth one scheduled for May 20. The protest demonstrations during the most recent general strike, on May 5, were the largest since the fall of the Greek military junta in 1974. More than 150,000 marched in the streets of Athens, while large protests also occurred in other cities. As the government's measures were being debated, some protesters attempted to storm the parliament building in Athens' Syntagma Square but were beaten back by the hated riot police.

The death of three bank workers who suffocated in a fire caused by a Molotov cocktail thrown during the May 5 protest in Athens has been seized on by the government to unleash a wave of police repression directed in particular against anarchist and immigrant groups. Cops ransacked the offices of an immigrant support network and raided cafes and homes in the Exarchia neighborhood, an anarchist stronghold, detaining dozens. While Papandreou denounced the "violence" of the demonstrators, a co-worker of those killed in the fire issued a widely disseminated statement revealing that the bank workers had been threatened with firing if they failed to show up for work and then were prevented from leaving when they attempted to do so. According to this worker, the building, which had no fire certificate, no sprinklers and no fire exits,

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On Haiti Capitulation

Massachusetts
29 April 2010

I welcome the 4/27/10 corrective statement issued by the ICL, "Repudiating Our Position on Haiti Earthquake: A Capitulation to U.S. Imperialism". I had a harder time understanding the initial position taken by *Workers Vanguard* than any other issue since I began reading your press in 1997. I emailed my concerns on 2/6/10 and was about to follow up this weekend since I have continued to be unsatisfied with the line in *WV* on this issue.

Natural disasters are not a new phenomenon. Marxists have also been around for quite some time, so it's instructive that no revolutionary has called for imperialist troops in the aftermath of natural disasters. Rosa Luxemburg didn't do it in the aftermath of a volcano. You didn't do it after Hurricane Katrina or the tsunami in Indonesia. There is some difference between calling for "troops in" and refusing for the time being to call for them out, but it's basically hair-splitting, and moreover was blurred by your initial analysis, which presented the US military as the only force that could provide relief. I had a hard time wondering how long you were going to refuse to call for troop withdrawal, how many other exceptions there could be, and what facts changed in *WV* (No. 955) that you called for "troops out," without repudiating your initial position. I think the corrective is overdue but absolutely essential to maintaining the revolutionary future of the ICL.

I do not consider myself a great Marxist theoretician, so it's hard to insist on my point of view against others who know far more than I do. I get things wrong and it's frustrating. I try to learn and get things right for the next time. I hope that the comrades who held to the initial error can be convinced of the correction and that the party as a whole can find its bearings. The ICL is operating under enormous pressures, trying to accomplish the most difficult and important task in human history: international, workers revolution and the establishment of a socialist society. I would love to see the day it finally happens.

Joel

The following letter, dated February 6, was received on May 8 after we requested that it be resent.

My initial reaction to the earthquake in Haiti was for the U.S./UN military to get out and let the rescue volunteers do their job. I don't think there's anything reformist about demanding that the imperialist military keep their bloody hands off a small neocolony. Nor do I see anything wrong with wanting international volunteers to help a desperate people in a time of emergency. This is different from the perennial reformist demand of "butter, not guns".

Workers Vanguard (No. 951) cites the history of imperialist abuse and the current crimes being committed, but does not call for U.S./UN troops out now. *WV* states: "The U.S. military is the only force on the ground with the capacity—e.g., trucks, planes, ships—to organize the transport of what food, water, medical and other supplies are getting to Haiti's population. And they're doing it in the typical piggish U.S. imperialist manner. We have always opposed U.S. and UN occupations in Haiti and everywhere—and it may become necessary to call for U.S./UN out of Haiti in the near future—but we are not going to call for an end to such aid as the desperate Haitian masses can get their hands on."

The Internationalist Group, in a 1/30/10 post, takes *WV* to task on this position. I expect *WV* to respond in the next issue, but I felt the need to write anyway, as a longtime *WV* reader, to express my confusion on this issue. I'd like to know what's wrong with calling for troops out now and allowing volunteer rescue workers in? If troops are allowed in, when would you call for them to leave? The devastation will be longterm and so likely will the occupation, which will be a staging ground against the Caribbean proletariat and especially Cuba.

To be clear, I do not support the IG position that the earthquake devastation opens up a good opportunity for a small but militant proletariat to lead the Haitian masses in socialist revolution. The IG seems to conjure up revolutionary opportunities all over the world. I'm just waiting for them to find a small but militant proletariat ready to lead Afghanistan in socialist revolution. I will need to research the history but Haiti does seem more akin to Afghanistan, as the SL has maintained for years. (It is not a sudden 2010 discovery, as the IG writes.) It is ultra-leftist to see revolutionary opportunities everywhere and always, despite the devastation, and in some areas disappearance, of the working class, and the tremendous retrogression in consciousness since the demise of the Soviet Union. It denies reality and leads to opportunism by ignoring the political gulf that separates even militant protesters from Marxism.

I'm writing in the hope that your next article will answer these questions and provide some historical examples where it was correct for Marxists to even temporarily drop the call for imperialist forces to get out of a neocolony. Reformists love to make exceptions, e.g., troops in Ireland to provide breathing space, etc. Marxists are relentless in criticizing any bend towards imperialism. I think your quote by Trotsky about troops putting out a fire is not a sufficient analogy. I don't know if the SL has made a mistake by over-reacting to the IG's erroneous position or if I am simply not understanding your analysis.

Joel

* * *

5 May 2010

Comrades,

I am very relieved to see the line change—it was very difficult to understand how it was OK, from a Trotskyist perspective, for the US military to invade Haiti. Apparently it should have been impossible. I give you credit for publicly and vociferously rejecting and denouncing that line.

DY

TROTSKY

LENIN

Karl Marx on the American Civil War

From the outset of the U.S. Civil War, much of the British capitalist class, whose textile industry depended on cotton imported from the Southern slave states, clamored for the North to allow the South to secede. Countering those forces, Karl Marx, who fought to rally the English working class to support the Union's blockade of Confederate ports, emphasized that the war posed a struggle to the death between two social systems that could no longer coexist: industrial capitalism in the North and chattel slavery in the South. It took the Civil War, the Second American Revolution, to crush the system of black enslavement. And it will take a third, socialist, American revolution to achieve genuine social equality for the oppressed black masses and the emancipation of all labor through the overthrow of the decrepit capitalist order.

"Let him go, he is not worth your anger!" Again and again English statesmanship cries—recently through the mouth of Lord John Russell—to the North of the United States this advice of Leporello to Don Juan's deserted love. [In literature and the theater, Leporello is the servant and loyal friend of the libertine Don Juan.] If the North lets the South go, it then frees itself from any association with slavery, from its historical original sin, and creates the basis of a new and higher development....

"*The South*," however, is neither a territory closely sealed off from the North geographically, nor a moral unity. It is not a country at all, but a battle slogan.

The advice of an amicable separation presupposes that the Southern Confederacy, although it assumed the offensive in the Civil War, at least wages it for defensive purposes. It is believed that the issue for the slaveholders' party is merely one of uniting the territories it has hitherto dominated into an independent group of states and withdrawing them from the supreme authority of the Union. Nothing could be more false.... A large part of the territory thus claimed is still in the possession of the Union and would first have to be conquered from it. None of the so-called border states, however, not even those in the possession of the Confederacy, were ever *actual slave states*. Rather, they constitute the area of the United States in which the system of slavery and the system of free labour exist side by side and contend for mastery, the actual field of battle between South and North, between slavery and freedom. The war of the Southern Confederacy is, therefore, not a war of defence, but a war of conquest, a war of conquest for the spread and perpetuation of slavery....

The present struggle between the South and North is, therefore, nothing but a struggle between two social systems, the system of slavery and the system of free labour. The struggle has broken out because the two systems can no longer live peacefully side by side on the North American continent. It can only be ended by the victory of one system or the other.

—Karl Marx, "The Civil War in the United States," 7 November 1861

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

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The closing dete for news in this issue is May 18.

No. 959 **21 May 2010**

Free the MOVE Prisoners!

The following May 10 protest letter was sent by the Partisan Defense Committee to Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole chairman Catherine C. McVey.

The Partisan Defense Committee once again joins with those supporting the release of the eight surviving political prisoners who have been collectively known as the MOVE 9. These men and women were victims of racist police brutality. They are innocent of the crimes for which they were convicted and imprisoned for over three decades.

We are outraged by your continued refusal to allow these innocent prisoners to be paroled. As we said in our letter of 6 March 2008, "We are mindful that a common ruse for denying parole for those who have been falsely convicted is the claimed failure to show 'remorse.' Having committed no crime, the imprisoned MOVE members have no reason to demonstrate any so-called 'remorse'." And yet that is exactly the pretext you consistently have used to turn down the MOVE 9's parole. In effect you are denying parole for anyone who maintains his or her innocence.

After a year-long siege, on August 8, 1978, an army of nearly 600 police surrounded the MOVE home to evict its defenseless residents. Three months before the attack, MOVE had allowed the police to search their home, resulting in the removal of what were inoperable weapons. The police turned on "deluge guns," flooding the basement of the house, and then unleashed a furious fusillade so intense that one of their own officers, James Ramp, was killed in the police cross fire.

At least eight witnesses testified that no gunshots came from the MOVE house. Three firemen said they did not know where the gunshots came from and had seen no MOVE members with guns. When weapons supposedly found at the MOVE home were brought to court, none of them had any fingerprints of the defendants on them, and none of the MOVE prisoners were ever charged with illegal weapons possession. After the trial, when presiding judge Edwin Malmed was asked, "Who shot James Ramp?" he replied, "I haven't the faintest idea." The MOVE prisoners were convicted of among other charges, conspiracy, a catchall charge used especially to prosecute people for their shared political beliefs when prosecutors are unable to prove that a criminal act was committed.

The denial of parole for the MOVE 9 can only be seen as part and parcel of

continued on page 5

MEMORIAL MEETING

A memorial meeting
in honor of
our comrade Joe Verret
will be held in Los Angeles
on June 12.
For more information, call
(213) 380-8239.

Virginia Governor Salutes Slavocracy

"Confederate History Month": Racist Garbage

Almost 150 years after the armed rebellion of the slaveowning Southern ruling class against the growing domination of the capitalist class in the North, we are still being subjected to the spectacle of unreconstructed apologists for the Confederacy beating the drum for the "lost cause." This time, it's the governor of Virginia, Robert McDonnell, who at the behest of the Sons of Confederate Veterans declared April Confederate History Month in Virginia. Adding insult to injury, in nary a one of the six "whereas" clauses in his original proclamation announcing this paean to the slavocracy did the governor mention the word "slavery."

When called out about his "omission," McDonnell—whose intellect was "refined" by earning a law degree at televangelist Pat Robertson's Regent University, formerly the Christian Broadcasting Network University—retorted: "There were any number of aspects to that conflict between the states. Obviously, it involved slavery. It involved other issues. But I focused on the ones I thought were most significant for Virginia." Obviously, the millions of black people held as chattel were not "significant" for the governor.

Among those who embrace the "heritage" of the slaveholders, it's a common refrain: the Civil War wasn't about slavery. But as Alexander Stephens, vice president of the Confederacy, laid out in his famous 1861 "Cornerstone" speech, "Our new Government is founded...its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and moral condition."

Virginia is the state where the most Civil War military engagements were fought, during which tens of thousands of Union soldiers, black and white, laid down their lives stamping out the system of slavery. It is the state where slaveowner Robert E. Lee was finally defeated and surrendered. It also is the state where the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision was met with a campaign of "Massive Resistance" in the late 1950s, as the segregationist state government closed down public schools, sometimes for years, rather than desegregate. When Democrat Doug Wilder, then a state legislator and later the first black governor of Virginia, pushed for a holiday to honor Martin Luther King in 1984, what he finally accepted was King's name tacked on to the preexisting state holiday for Confederate generals Lee and Stonewall Jackson! Up to this day, a major artery through northern Virginia, right across the Potomac from the Lincoln Memorial, is named Jefferson Davis Highway.

For the better part of a century, the Democrats, earlier the main party of the slaveholders, ruled the Jim Crow South with an iron fist supplemented by Klan terror. In the supposedly "post-racial" America of Barack Obama, who preaches the lie that the civil rights movement moved the U.S. "90 percent of the way" to ending racism, black people are still branded by their skin color. Specially oppressed as a race-color caste at the bottom of this capitalist society, the black population is confronted every day with the legacy of chattel slavery. The enduring reality of the color line also serves to obscure the fundamental division of society into antagonistic social classes with irreconcilably opposed interests.

McDonnell's Confederate History Month proclamation was issued amid a burgeoning white racist backlash, e.g., the Tea Party movement, over Wall Street Democrat Barack Obama's ascendency to the White House. In fact, as Commander-in-Chief of U.S. imperialism, Obama is the overseer of the whole plantation, whose job is to enforce the racist capitalist status quo. The president created an uproar last Memorial Day when he sent a wreath to the Confederate war memorial in Arlington National Cemetery. The cemetery was built on Robert E. Lee's opulent Virginia estate during the Civil War as a resting place for Union dead, and over 15,000 are buried there. Later, in the spirit of reconciliation between North and South, consolidated over the bloody, broken bodies of black people forced into peonage with the defeat of Reconstruction, a Confederate memorial was built, complete with a frieze depicting a black mammy taking care of a white baby and a slave boy going off to war with his master. Ever since Virginia-born arch-racist president Woodrow Wilson dedicated the memorial in 1914, presidents have been paying homage to the Confederate dead.

While Obama honors the rebel dead, we recall the first Memorial Day (earlier known as Decoration Day) before the holiday was later turned into a commemoration of U.S. imperialist warmongering. On 1 May 1865, in Charleston, South Carolina, nearly 10,000 former slaves marched onto the grounds of the old Washington Race Course, where wealthy Charleston planters and socialites had gathered before the war. During the final year of the war, the racecourse had been turned into a prison camp, where hundreds of Union soldiers died and were buried. Black schoolchildren marched by their graves, softly singing "John Brown's Body" and decorating the graves with flowers. The former slaves were joined by several Union regiments, including the 104th and 35th Colored regiments, as well as the famous 54th Massachusetts. The liberators marched around the graves with the liberated in solemn salute.

The American Civil War was the last great bourgeois-democratic revolution. In pursuing its class interests, the Northern bourgeoisie was compelled to abolish black chattel slavery and destroy the old Southern plantation agricultural system. The recruitment of blacks into the Union Army helped turn the tide of the war. But the promise of black freedom was betrayed when the Northern capitalists formed an alliance with the remnants of the slavocracy in order to exploit Southern resources and the freedmen. The capitalist system in its youth was historically progressive, but today produces nothing but unmitigated horror. Our task is to build a revolutionary party that champions the cause of all the oppressed. Finish the Civil War—for black liberation through socialist revolution!■

Civil War: Black Troops Helped Turn Tide

Library of Congress

Company E, 4th U.S. Colored Infantry.

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25 Years Ago: Racist Government Bombed Black Philadelphia

Remember the MOVE Massacre

May 13 marks the 25th anniversary of the 1985 MOVE massacre. Eleven people, including five children, were burned alive after police, acting on orders from black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode and in collusion with the Feds, dropped a powerful incendiary bomb on the Osage Avenue home of the largely black MOVE commune in West Philadelphia. The firebombing followed a 12-hour siege during which the cops unloaded over 10,000 rounds of ammunition into the house. Firefighters on site were held back, and cops shot at anyone who tried to escape the burning building. The inferno spread, destroying 61 houses and leaving hundreds homeless in the black neighborhood.

Then-president Ronald Reagan, the FBI, the Philly cops and Wilson Goode were all responsible for this hideous crime, a stark example of the racist terror that black people are subject to in capitalist America. None of the perpetrators ever faced charges, while Ramona Africa, the sole adult survivor, served every day of her seven-year prison sentence. Immediately after the massacre, and ever since, the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the SL, have sought to sear this racist atrocity into the memory of the working class.

In July 1985, the SL held a public forum in New York City to honor the MOVE martyrs, at which family members and supporters spoke. We wrote in protest

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Police helicopter drops bomb on MOVE commune, Philadelphia, 13 May 1985. Eleven MOVE members, including five children, were killed and an entire black neighborhood was destroyed in the ensuing inferno.

UPI, Barger/WCAU-TV (inset)

After Decades of UAW Misleaders' Betrayals

California NUMMI Auto Plant Axed

On April 1, Toyota shut down the New United Motor Manufacturing (NUMMI) auto assembly plant in Fremont, California. Some 4,700 employees, including 3,700 members of the United Auto Workers (UAW) union were thrown out of work, and tens of thousands of workers in the auto parts supply chain and other businesses could be axed. This is a body blow to the multiracial working class in the San Francisco Bay Area, once a bastion of union power. It is also testimony to the trade-union bureaucracy's class-collaborationist policies, which are based on the lie of a "partnership" between labor and its capitalist exploiters and their parties, particularly the Democrats, who falsely pose as "friends of labor."

First opened in 1963 by General Motors, the sprawling Fremont facility was once the biggest auto plant on the West Coast.

Reuters

UAW president Ron Gettelfinger (second from left) with Big Three auto bosses at December 2008 Senate bailout hearing.

It was closed in 1982 amid a wave of mass layoffs and plant shutdowns in auto. At the time, class-struggle militants in UAW Local 1364 at the plant fought to mobilize the power of the union to fight against the layoffs and keep the plants open. In a leaflet titled "We Need a Sit-down!", the Militant Caucus argued that a plant occupation backed up by mass picket lines "would inspire the support of thousands of UAW members industry-wide across the country who are themselves facing layoffs or already on the street." As a former member of the Militant Caucus wrote in a letter to *Workers Vanguard* last year (see "UAW Tops Roll Over as Bosses Ax NUMMI Auto Plant," *WV* No. 946, 6 November 2009):

> "When we called for a sit-down strike, it struck a real chord, especially among a small number of very experienced workers who took up the call and fought for it. Local 1364's union bureaucrats countered with the argument that these tactics were OK in the 1930s but were now illegal, and union members needed instead to get out the vote for the Democrats. Unfortunately, the bureaucracy's fear-mongering and defeatism prevailed. In all, close to 6,000 auto workers from the Fremont plant were laid off and thrown onto the streets of Reagan's America."

In 1984, the Fremont plant was reopened as a joint venture between GM and Toyota. According to the mediator who brokered this partnership, GM wanted to learn Toyota's innovative production system, and Toyota sought to gain experience running a factory in the United States. As he pointed out, the linchpin for cementing the deal was then-UAW International president Doug Fraser, who "helped persuade Toyota that workers in Fremont would adapt to Japanese production methods" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 28 February). The UAW tops imposed an agreement that tore up the old union contract, disbanded Local 1364, which had a reputation for militancy, and replaced it with Local 2244. All former GM workers had to go through a screening process in order to be rehired. In line with Toyota's "team" concept, workers on the shopfloor were expected to "cooperate" with management to "solve problems," undermining the union shop steward system, facilitating speedup and subverting union work rules. The union misleaders instituted a new "partnership" with NUMMI, paving the way for massive speedup and additional labor discipline.

In exchange, the workers were promised "lifetime jobs" in the supposed Toyota tradition. This promise has always been a lie, as NUMMI (like Toyota in Japan and elsewhere in the U.S.) relied heavily on so-called "temporary" workers who could be dismissed at any time. Up to the last day, the Toyota bosses worked to squeeze every last ounce of production out of NUMMI workers. They held out the promise of a "retention bonus" in the form of severance pay as an inducement to keep the assembly line rolling without disruption and then threatened to withdraw the bonus offer. In the end, NUMMI workers were dumped on the recession-ravaged streets with a minimal severance package averaging $54,000, while those on disability, after working countless years on backbreaking assembly lines, are to receive less than $22,000, regardless of seniority.

The response of the bureaucrats to this catastrophe—from the UAW International down to the local officials—was to go begging to the capitalist politicians for redress, coupled with an orgy of flag-waving chauvinism against "foreign" Toyota. This included a petition campaign for a consumer boycott of Toyota and union-organized pickets of Toyota dealerships under the banner "Toyota Is Killing American Jobs."

This "America First" protectionism poisons international solidarity with foreign workers, scapegoating them for the loss of jobs in the U.S. At the same time, such chauvinism sacrifices the class interests of U.S. workers to those of the union-busting, job-slashing American bosses, concealing the fact that it is the capitalists and their profit system that are responsible for the devastation of labor. For decades, the UAW officialdom has bent over backward to bolster the "competitiveness" of the American automakers. As many angry NUMMI workers themselves noted, the UAW tops gave a free pass to GM, whose pullout from NUMMI last year opened the door for Toyota to dump its only union operation in the country.

GM ended its partnership with Toyota during last year's "restructuring" of the American auto industry, which was a condition of the massive financial bailout of GM and Chrysler. The purpose of this deal, spearheaded by Obama's Democratic Party administration, was to restore the profitability of GM and the other U.S. automakers by breaking the back of the UAW. And UAW president Ron Gettelfinger worked hand in glove with Obama to make it happen. As a result, GM closed down 14 plants and laid off some 21,000 workers. Those still employed are subject to intense speedup, while being hamstrung by a six-year no-strike pledge.

In exchange, Gettelfinger accepted 17.5 percent of GM stock, to be held by the retiree health care trust, with a union official taking a seat on the company board of directors. That their own union leaders are stockholders in GM, sitting at the auto bosses' table where they will have a direct hand in ratcheting up the exploitation of the UAW's remaining members, was also not lost on many NUMMI workers. As it is now, with GM again starting to turn a profit and ramping up production, it can hire new workers at half as much pay for doing the same work as existing UAW members, by the terms of the sellout contract brokered by the union tops in 2007.

Union bureaucrats like Doug Fraser encouraged Toyota to "export" jobs to the U.S. in the first place by calling for protectionist legislation that would impose harsh trade sanctions if the foreign automakers did not assemble vehicles in the U.S. After starting at NUMMI, Toyota went on to open five non-union plants, four in the "open shop" South. Over the ensuing decades, the UAW tops have steered clear and wide of the necessary class-struggle fight to organize the non-union plants. In testimony before Congress in 2008, Gettelfinger actually boasted that the "gap in labor costs" between the Big Three and the non-union "foreign transplant operations will be largely or completely eliminated."

In the face of such misleadership, some auto workers turned to "oppositionists" who offer nothing but more of the same rotten program of reliance on the class enemy and its representatives. A case in point is a grouping in Local 2244 around *Autoworkers News*, a newsletter put out by Local committeeman Juan Castillo, which called to "put pressure on the state politicians to pass the bills that would give incentives to Auto Manufacturing Companies" (28 September 2009) to save NUMMI. While railing against Local officials who amnestied GM, this opposition amnestied Toyota, playing into the hands of the company's machinations. When Local officials claimed they were holding out for a better severance package, *Autoworkers News* (11 January) complained that the company's paltry offer "may be rescinded because of the Union's position."

Reuters

February 12 rally at UAW union hall protests plant closure.

Betrayed by the union bureaucracy, a number of NUMMI workers began to denounce the union as a whole, calling the UAW "Union Against Workers." Such sentiments are inflamed by the actions of the union bureaucrats. Union officials reportedly called in the cops—the bosses' strikebreaking thugs—when a January 24 union meeting, for which the opposition had mobilized, dissolved in an uproar.

continued on page 11

Victory to Long Beach Boeing Strike!

AP

LOS ANGELES—On May 11, 1,700 Boeing production workers organized in UAW Local 148 went on strike at the company's Long Beach, California, assembly plant, stopping production of the massive C-17 military transport aircraft that have been a workhorse of U.S. imperialism's occupations of Iraq, Afghanistan and Haiti. The strikers, most of whom have worked at the plant for decades and are close to retirement, overwhelmingly rejected the company's proposal to make the workers pay more for their pensions and medical benefits. The multiracial workforce also faces layoffs as Boeing cuts production, with Congress planning to stop purchases of the C-17 by 2013.

L.A. Spartacist League comrades have shown support for the strike on the picket lines and at a May 14 rally, which was attended by Local 148 members and other unionists. The comrades report that workers are plenty angry at the company for threatening to throw them on the scrap heap after years of toiling for the aerospace giant. Strikers have acted to stop scabs, but many are still crossing the picket lines. Teamsters trash haulers and UPS truck drivers have pledged to honor the picket lines. It is the duty of all area unions to back Local 148 as it fights this important labor battle.

Katrina: Danziger Bridge Cover-Up Exposed

Homicidal New Orleans Cops

The notorious New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) has been so flagrantly kill-crazy since Hurricane Katrina that newly elected mayor Mitch Landrieu called in the federal Justice Department earlier this month to help "clean up" the NOPD. Last year, the Feds raided the NOPD's homicide department as part of investigations into killings by the cops on New Orleans' Danziger Bridge, six days after the hurricane, as well as their subsequent cover-up and other atrocities that had been exposed in the national media. Almost five years after the events, with the statute of limitations set to expire, four former police officers pleaded guilty in federal court to charges relating to the shootings on Danziger Bridge. But these federal investigations are not about "justice"; they are a con game to rehabilitate the NOPD and "help repair the enormous breach in public trust the department now faces," in the words of an editorial in the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* (25 February). It's all so the NOPD can better do its job of terrorizing working people, the black poor and just about everyone else.

Hurricane Katrina threw a spotlight on the reality of black oppression in the U.S. and exposed the venality, class arrogance and utter ineptitude of the capitalist government at all levels, from the mayor on up to the White House. In the hurricane's wake, the raw violence at the core of the capitalist state was stripped of its democratic facade as a tidal wave of police and white vigilante terror was unleashed against black New Orleans residents. National television broadcasts of thousands of desperate survivors trapped in the Convention Center evoked the horrors of the Middle Passage. Barely a day after the flooding, the government and its media mouthpieces made the victims out as "criminals," spreading vile tales of black looters and rapists (while white residents resourcefully "found" food and water and cops helped themselves to Cadillacs from a local dealership).

Brandon/Times-Picayune

4 September 2005: Lance Madison arrested at Danziger Bridge after cops shot six people, killing two, including Madison's disabled brother.

Fanning this racist hysteria, Ray Nagin, then the black Democratic mayor, ranted, "Anybody who is caught looting in the city of New Orleans will go directly to Angola," one of the U.S.'s most notorious prisons. "God bless you if you are there," he warned. The authorities wasted no time in constructing a prison camp in the parking lot of the Greyhound bus station—the notorious "Camp Greyhound"—using Angola prison labor. The warden from Angola prison declared that this was the first step in the rebuilding of New Orleans: "You can't have the security until you have the jail" (see "Notes on New Orleans" by Joe Vetter, *WV* No. 955, 26 March).

Marko Georgiev

New Orleans, 1 September 2005: Police mill around motionless body at Religious and Richard Streets. After being photographed, cops grabbed camera's memory card and reporter's notebook at gunpoint but took wrong card by mistake.

Introducing its investigative series "Law and Disorder: Police Shootings in the Week After Hurricane Katrina," the *Times-Picayune* (12 December 2009) wrote, "New Orleans police shot 10 civilians, at least four of whom died, according to interviews and internal police documents.... In the week after Katrina, New Orleans police killed and wounded as many people as they do in a typical year." At least eleven black men were hunted down by white "militia" patrolling the Algiers district with the support of the NOPD. The 2006 Danish documentary *Welcome to New Orleans* shows one vigilante gloating, "It was great! It was like pheasant season in South Dakota. If it moved, you shot it." These killings are only the ones that have been documented. With the massive police and state cover-up, the extent of the deadly racist frenzy probably will never be known.

Most notorious are the shootings at Danziger Bridge, where, according to the *New York Times* (5 May), police accounts describe "the strafing of unarmed civilians." The *Times-Picayune* (18 February 2007) recounted:

> "Shooting victims and police agree on only a few points: that about 9 a.m. on Sept. 4, 2005, six people were shot by police, five of them on the eastern side of the Danziger Bridge. The Bartholomew family—Leonard Bartholomew III, his wife, Susan, and their teenage daughter, Lesha—jumped behind a concrete barrier with a relative, Jose Holmes, and his friend, Brissette. The four survivors were repeatedly hit by police bullets: Susan's right arm was partially blasted off, Lesha had four wounds, while Leonard was shot in the head, back and left heel."

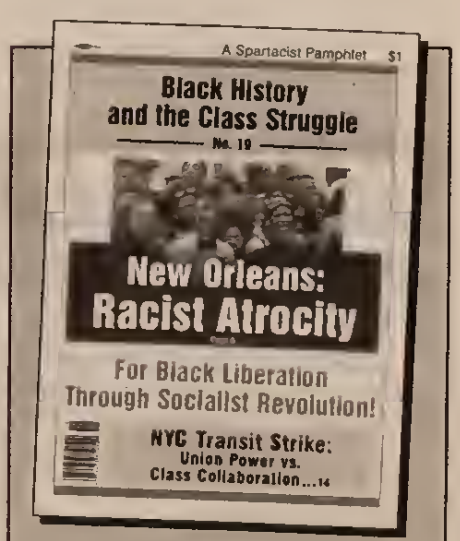
James Brissette died on the spot. He was 19 years old and, according to the police report, he had seven gunshot wounds to his arms, neck, buttocks and leg. The family had been trying to get to a Winn-Dixie grocery store on the other side of the bridge. Also heading east were two brothers, Lance and Ronald Madison. They ran over the bridge to flee the shooting; Ronald was shot and killed by a cop in the driveway of the former Friendly Inn Motel at the foot of the bridge. He was 40 years old and, according to his family, mentally disabled. Lance Madison was arrested on trumped-up charges of attempted murder.

Police lieutenant Michael Lohman arrived at the bridge shortly after the killings, along with a host of other police, and instantly began to orchestrate the cover-up, including making sure that the gun cops planted at the scene was not traceable (the victims were all unarmed) and rewriting the official report to be more plausible. In the *Times-Picayune* (7 March), reporter James Gill described how Lohman played an instrumental role in protecting the cops from murder charges in 2008 related to the Danziger Bridge shootings. Lohman claimed he was shown secret grand jury testimony by an assistant district attorney, leading the judge to dismiss the case. Gill noted that the other assistant DA working the case, who was at the meeting where Lohman was allegedly shown the transcript, "says it just didn't happen. It was just a ploy to get Lohman's men off the hook." Later, Lohman became the first cop to plead guilty to the federal charges over the shootings.

Three other cop shootings the week after Katrina were investigated in depth in the *Times-Picayune* series. Police shot Danny Brumfield Sr., a black 45-year-old grandfather, in the back outside the Convention Center and left him to die. Matthew McDonald, a white man, was also fatally shot in the back by a cop with an AR-15 assault rifle; cops told McDonald's relatives that an unknown murderer had done it. Keenon McCann, a black man standing by a bottled water truck, was shot multiple times. Police claimed he had a gun, though it was never found. He survived his injuries; when he was released from the hospital, police sought to jail him for aggravated assault. The *Times-Picayune* (12 December 2009) reported that, in the period immediately following Hurricane Katrina, the NOPD superintendent "instructed police on the scenes of officer-involved shootings to write up only a brief report and mark the incident as 'NAT,' the police code for 'necessary action taken'."

The Feds are also looking at the death of 31-year-old Henry Glover, a case first brought to light by the *Nation* in December 2008. Glover was shot by an unknown person four days after the hurricane. When a helpful passer-by, William Tanner, drove him to a nearby school commandeered by the NOPD, Tanner was handcuffed and beaten by the cops, who confiscated the car with Glover in it, still alive. Weeks later, Tanner found his car, burnt out with Glover's charred remains still inside, behind a district police station.

The New Orleans Police Department has a long, sordid record of brutal racist murder and cover-up. This is not a matter of "rogue cops"; any illusion that the NOPD, or any other arm of the capitalist state, can be reformed is dangerously misguided. The police street thugs are a force of organized violence to protect the capitalists' class rule and private property. As for the Feds, look at their history of setting up civil rights activists for murder, from Viola Liuzzo in Alabama in 1965 to the Greensboro, North Carolina, massacre of leftist anti-Klan demonstrators in 1979. In the U.S., a country founded on chattel slavery, the ruling class depends on the forcible segregation of the overwhelming majority of the black population at the bottom of society, inflaming racial divisions to keep the working class divided and misled. It will take a socialist revolution to end the savage exploitation and brutal racial oppression of capitalist class rule and the barbarism through which it is enforced. Our purpose is to build the workers party necessary to lead the proletariat in that struggle. ■



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Prisoners...

(continued from page 2)

a decades-long vendetta against MOVE and its supporters. The most grotesque example of this took place 25 years ago in May 1985, when they watched in horror from their Pennsylvania prison cells as the Philadelphia police, in league with federal authorities, dropped a high-powered explosive bomb on MOVE's Osage Avenue home. This caused the burning to death of eleven people, including five children, and left an entire black neighborhood in smoldering ruins.

It is an injustice that these men and women were ever incarcerated at all. They are innocent survivors of premeditated police assaults. We call once more for the immediate, unconditional release of Debbie Africa, Janine Africa, Janet Africa, Chuck Africa, Eddie Africa, Phil Africa, Delbert Africa and Mike Africa. ■

Apologists for French Neocolonialism in Africa

France: NPA Social Democrats Support Military Coup in Niger

We print below an article translated from Le Bolchévik *No. 191 (March 2010), newspaper of the Ligue Trotskyste de France, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).*

On February 18 a military coup d'état took place in Niger, one of the world's poorest countries. This landlocked country in the Sahel region contains major

LE BOLCHEVIK

uranium mines, operated for 40 years by the French Areva nuclear power conglomerate (and its predecessors), which gets almost half its annual uranium supply from Niger. Uranium is a strategically important metal especially for French imperialism with its nuclear power plants and atomic bombs. The country of Niger, whose independence French premier Charles De Gaulle engineered in 1960, remains solidly in the French neocolonial African backyard—commonly referred to as *Françafrique*—which was officially declared to be a thing of the past by French president Nicolas Sarkozy and Gabon's president Ali Bongo, whose father Omar ruled Gabon for 42 years.

As it happens, the president of the capitalist state of Niger, Mamadou Tandja, had had the nerve to want to renegotiate prices with Areva and tried to get the support of the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state as a counterweight to French imperialism. In the eyes of French imperialism, that's a crime far more serious than physically liquidating a few opponents or dissolving parliament: Tandja was reportedly locked up in a military camp somewhere.

What has changed regarding *Françafrique* is not so much that Tandja didn't find himself immediately riddled with bullets. It is that, above all, there is now a French social-democratic organization (which used to call itself "far left" and even "Trotskyist") that supported the military coup that deposed Tandja. Indeed, the New Anti-Capitalist Party (NPA) of Olivier Besancenot has just published an article in *Tout Est à Nous* (25 February) that, starting with the title ("Niger—A Counter-Coup d'Etat"), blames the villain Tandja for what happened to him after he anti-democratically dissolved parliament and extended his own mandate by a phony plebiscite. The article goes on: "The president's dealings had been condemned by the International Community...and called by many a constitutional coup d'état." The "International Community" complete with capital letters is apparently the name the NPA now gives French imperialism, its government led by Sarkozy and [Foreign Minister Bernard] Kouchner, and France's allies. Despite the orders of the "International Community," an unrepentant Tandja "wanted to maintain the Sixth Republic (that was autocratically installed)" according to the NPA, which goes on to denounce "these maneuvers by Tandja to maintain himself in power and his obvious commitment to blocking negotiations with the opposition."

AFP

François Lafite

Members of new military junta gather in Niamey, Niger, in February. Right: Olivier Besancenot, spokesman for French New Anti-Capitalist Party, which hailed military coup.

The NPA hails the military intervention, giving advice to the Quai d'Orsay [France's Foreign Office] and to the new dictator of Niger, Salou Djibo, who claims that he wants to organize elections and draw up a new Constitution: "Some observers see this putsch as an opportunity to put an end to the drift toward autocracy.... If the purpose of the coup was to rid the country of the dictatorship, they should go all the way and not let themselves be overtaken by the vertigo of power as happened in Guinea, Chad and Togo...." And they continue: "Confronted with a looming famine, the abandonment of [dispossessed] local populations, particularly the Tuaregs, and the curse represented by its mineral wealth, Niger must take advantage of this turnaround in the situation. To that end, a hands-off policy is necessary and the Manichean discourse of silence or intervention must be rejected."

According to the NPA, Niger's "curse" isn't the yoke of French imperialism but the country's mineral riches! No matter how obscenely pro-imperialist these declarations are, don't expect them to stir up any indignation in the NPA's ranks. The NPA is a deeply social-democratic organization and as such is based on the union bureaucracy and the aristocracy of labor (and also, markedly for the NPA, the bohemian petty-bourgeoisie) who are bought off by the imperialists. For that the imperialists draw in particular upon the superprofits they have reaped from their colonies and neocolonies, such as the plunder of Niger for more than a century. As Lenin explained in 1915 in "Socialism and War":

> "Opportunism and social-chauvinism stand on a common economic basis—the interests of a thin crust of privileged workers and of the petty-bourgeoisie, who are defending their privileged position, their 'right' to some modicum of the profits that their 'own' national bourgeoisie obtain from robbing other nations, from the advantages of their Great-Power status, etc."

The NPA's crowning argument for lining up behind its own bourgeoisie is the question of "democracy." It was in the name of the struggle for "democracy" that the NPA's predecessor, Alain Krivine's Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, supported the pro-capitalist counterrevolutionaries of Solidarność in Poland in the early 1980s and then supported the right-wing bourgeois politician Jacques Chirac in the 2002 [French] presidential elections. From that to supporting a military junta in *Françafrique* is but a short step which the NPA took very blithely.

Democracy is nothing but a convenient guise for the bourgeoisie to hide its own bloody dictatorship against the classes and social layers that it exploits and oppresses. In disappearing the principal question—democracy *for which class?*—the NPA comes out unconditionally for the rule of the bourgeoisie—democratic if possible, but not necessarily—and always opposes the dictatorship of the proletariat (which after all is only democratic for the workers and the oppressed). Lenin wrote in his polemic against the renegade Kautsky:

> "There is not a single state, however democratic, which has no loopholes or reservations in its constitution guaranteeing the bourgeoisie the possibility of dispatching troops against the workers, of proclaiming martial law, and so forth, in the case of a 'violation of public order,' and actually in case the exploited class 'violates' its position of slavery and tries to behave in a non-slavish manner."

The NPA reaches the height of the grotesque by supporting a military junta in Niger, which it presents as a step toward the restoration of "democracy." If the NPA sees democracy in pink and green colors in France [i.e., the social democracy and the Greens], apparently according to them khaki is just as good a color for Africa! After a hundred years of French imperialist atrocities in Niger and the whole region, these countries endure horrendous and growing poverty. There is almost no working class in that whole part of Africa, which means that these countries lack the only social force that can lead all the oppressed in smashing the imperialist yoke once and for all and fight for an international socialist revolution. In fact, the West African immigrant workers in France can play a strategic role and serve as a living bridge between the struggle for revolution in France and in these countries. This makes it all the more vital to fight in France itself against the depredations of French imperialism overseas, and to overthrow capitalism here and throughout the whole world. Only then can we begin to remedy the ravages of imperialist oppression and lay the bases for a society of plenty based on a collectivized and internationally planned economy. *French imperialism out of Africa!* ■

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From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

May Day Amidst Global Mayhem

As May approaches, the day celebrated for over a century as an emblem of workers power, May Day, seems to have become a symbol of its fall.

That's because, as the economic system has gone through shocks, after-shocks, and tremors, social and communal wealth has been funneled to banking and corporate interests—bailouts for billionaires, while workers have faced, at best, a plague of cutbacks; at worst, mass layoffs and firings as businesses reorganize by being even more antagonistic to labor.

Marx and Engels rightly determined that "the modern state is but the executive committee of the bourgeoisie." Why else would the world's economic powers pour hundreds of billions into corporate coffers, virtually no questions asked, while dropping a pittance—like coins in the cup—to workers and their families?

May Day began in America in the midst of the Haymarket Rebellion of the 1800's, in struggle for the 40 hour week and an end to child labor.

May Day still represents workers struggle in America, in Europe, in Africa and Asia, against State and corporate repression and greed.

In a nutshell, capitalism is in severe crisis, and the phony wars and very real rise of cronyism are but mirrors of that crisis.

If workers are to use their billions to change the world, they must join together across false barriers to build a new and better world where life and liberty are more precious than profit.

It's not only possible; it's necessary.

31 March 2010

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Send urgently needed contributions for Mumia's legal defense, made payable to "National Lawyers Guild Foundation" and earmarked for "Mumia," to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, P.O. Box 2012, New York, NY 10159.

If you wish to correspond with Mumia, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

MOVE...

(continued from page 3)

that the mass murder carried the bloody signature of the Reagan years and was intended "to send a message to black America and 'radicals' of every stripe. 'Anti-terrorism' means massive government terror against anyone who is out of step in Reagan's America" (*WV* No. 379, 17 May 1985). Under both Democratic and Republican administrations, the onslaught against black people, synonymous with Reagan reaction, has continued unabated to this day.

From the moment that MOVE surfaced in the early 1970s in the racist hellhole of Philadelphia, denouncing "the system" and defending the right to armed self-defense, this back-to-nature group was subjected to police harassment, beatings and hundreds of arrests. On 8 August 1978, 600 cops unleashed a barrage of gunfire as they stormed MOVE's Powelton Village compound. When MOVE members emerged from their home, the police dragged, kicked and stomped Delbert Africa nearly to death. Nine MOVE members were framed up and sentenced in 1981 to 30-100 years on charges of killing a cop who died in the police crossfire at Powelton Village—even though the judge stated that he didn't have the "faintest idea" who killed the cop. Merle Africa died in her prison cell in 1998. The rest of the MOVE 9 are still in Pennsylvania's dungeons (see page 2).

In an expression of solidarity with those imprisoned for standing up to racist capitalist repression, the PDC provided monthly stipends for Ramona Africa during her imprisonment as it has also done for the MOVE 9 and death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, who became a MOVE supporter while reporting on the MOVE 9 trial.

Mumia, an innocent man framed up on false charges of killing police officer Daniel Faulkner, was sentenced to death in 1982 for his political views. His case is what the death penalty is all about—a legacy of chattel slavery, the lynch rope made legal. A former Black Panther leader as a teenager in the 1960s, Mumia became a prominent radical radio journalist known as "The Voice of the Voiceless" who reported on the racist Philly cops and courts. It was during the sham trial of the MOVE 9 that Mumia became sympathetic to the MOVE organization.

To avenge the MOVE martyrs, the working class must fight to smash this capitalist system, whose rulers inflict a special oppression on black people as a means to divide and attack the entire working class. *We will not forget the MOVE massacre! Free the MOVE members, Mumia and all class-war prisoners! For black liberation through socialist revolution!*■

Join the Labor Black Leagues!

The Labor Black Leagues stand for mobilizing the masses of black and working people for militant integrated struggle against the brutal system of racist oppression that is capitalist America.

Initiated by and fraternally allied to the Spartacist League, a multiracial revolutionary Marxist organization, the Labor Black Leagues are part of the revolutionary movement of the workers and the oppressed against the bosses and for socialism.

Since they were brought to this country in chains and enslaved, black people have been an integral part of American class society while at the same time forcibly segregated at the bottom. It took the Civil War to emancipate black people from chattel slavery. But the Civil War was not carried to its completion, and black people were freed from slavery only to be stripped of political rights and economically subjugated. The civil rights movement, tied to pro-Democratic Party pressure politics and sold out by liberal reformism, failed to complete the unfinished business of the Civil War. We fight to win the entire working class, including white workers as well as the growing number of Latino and other immigrants, to the fight for black liberation, strategic to the American revolution. Black and working-class militants must stand for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and in their defense against racist and chauvinist anti-immigrant attacks. An injury to one is an injury to all!

The Labor Black Leagues raise the call: Finish the Civil War! Forward to a workers state! They base their perspectives on the realization that it will take a third American revolution, a workers revolution, to finally liberate black people.

If You Stand For —

1 Full rights for black people and for everyone else in jobs, housing and schools! Defeat the racist assault on affirmative action! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programs! For union hiring halls! Open up the universities to all—for open admissions, free tuition and a full living stipend for all students. Free, quality, integrated public education for all!

2 A fighting labor movement—picket lines mean don't cross! Defeat police scabherding and strikebreaking through mass pickets and union defense guards! For sit-down strikes against mass layoffs! Fight union-busting; keep the capitalist courts out of the unions! Organize the unorganized, unionize the South! Jobs for all—for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay with full cost-of-living escalator clause! Cops, prison guards and security guards out of the unions!

3 Fight for women's rights! Defend abortion clinics! Free abortion on demand; free, quality 24-hour childcare! Equal pay for equal work! For free, quality health care for all!

4 Full citizenship rights for all immigrants; everyone who made it into this country has the right to stay and live decently! Stop deportations! No to racist "English only" laws! Down with anti-Latino, anti-Semitic, anti-Arab and anti-Asian bigotry!

5 Defend the separation of church and state! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! Down with the anti-sex witchhunt—cops and courts out of the bedroom! Down with all laws against consensual activities such as "crimes without victims" like pornography, gambling, drugs and prostitution!

6 Mass labor/black/Latino mobilizations drawing on the power of the unions against the racist terrorists. Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

7 Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free all victims of racist capitalist repression! No faith in the capitalist courts! No to gun control! Defend victims of cop terror and racist police frame-up! No illusions in civilian review boards or community control of the police! Down with the racist and anti-labor "war on drugs"! For decriminalization of drugs! For class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense; support the work of the Partisan Defense Committee!

8 Unconditional opposition to every attempt to abolish welfare! Down with slave-labor, union-busting "workfare" schemes! Fight any and every attempt of the government to take away or cut back even more social programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, public health and aid to education and housing! For a massive program of public works—high-quality integrated housing, schools, libraries, hospitals for the working people and the poor!

9 Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! For international working-class solidarity! Support revolutionary struggles of working people abroad! Defend the deformed workers states—Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea—against capitalist restoration and imperialist attack! For proletarian political revolution to oust their Stalinist bureaucracies! For labor action against U.S. imperialist war moves and military adventures! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico! U.S. troops out of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean!

10 Down with the Democrats and Republicans! For a revolutionary workers party that champions the cause of all the oppressed! Finish the Civil War! Those who labor must rule! For a workers government to take industry away from its racist, incompetent and corrupt owners! Rebuild America on a socialist planned economy!

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Greece...

(continued from page 1)

was locked and even the Internet connection was cut. We demand that all charges be dropped against the anarchists and all other leftist protesters, including those arrested during the earlier general strikes!

While the PASOK government's attacks on working people are in large part dictated by the IMF and the major European powers, with imperialist Germany in the lead, the Greek ruling class is not just a minion of the EU; it is using this as an opportunity to crack down on the workers. Meanwhile, the arrogant German bourgeoisie has unleashed a chauvinist campaign against the smaller and weaker European economies. German capitalists have been sneering that Greece has been living "beyond its means," while a leading spokesman for German industrialists snidely suggested that Athens cut its deficit by selling off some "uninhabited islands."

The government's threats and the repression have failed to intimidate workers. But a major obstacle to a class-struggle fight against the capitalists and their government is the Greek chauvinism pushed by the official leaders of the workers movement, including those of the Communist Party (KKE), who oppose the IMF and EU imperialist bloodsuckers on the narrow nationalist basis that they threaten Greece's national sovereignty. It is only on the basis of proletarian internationalism that the workers of Greece can be mobilized in revolutionary struggle in their own class interests at the head of all the oppressed. Today the bankruptcy of the whole capitalist-imperialist system is clear, but what is lacking is revolutionary leadership to finally end exploitation, poverty, racism and war. For a Socialist United States of Europe! For world socialist revolution to establish an international division of labor in a planned socialist economy!

We reprint below a 28 April leaflet published by our comrades of the Trotskyist Group of Greece. It was distributed at two May Day demonstrations in Athens—one organized by the All Workers Militant Front (PAME), a trade-union federation associated with the KKE, and the other organized by the two largest trade-union federations, the private sector General Confederation of Workers of Greece (GSEE) and the Confederation of Public Servants (ADEDY), both led by PASOK.

* * *

The attempts by the PASOK government to shift the bourgeoisie's massive debt burden onto the backs of the working people have led to furious resistance by tens of thousands of workers and pensioners. General strikes throughout Greece in February and March, as well as two days of strikes in April, repeatedly brought the country to a halt, closing down transportation, schools, banks and government offices. The workers' response to PASOK's savage "stability program"—imposed as a precondition for any bailout from the EU and the IMF—has been: "We won't pay!" In March, angry workers occupied government buildings, including the National Printing Office, where they sought to prevent the printing of the legislation bringing the austerity plan into effect. Olympic Airways workers closed down the central Athens artery of Panepistimiou for several days in protest against layoffs.

Athens: Cops attack April 22 rally during civil servants strike.

PASOK's "stability program" involves thousands of job losses, raising the retirement age and a massive increase in the cost of living resulting from wage cuts, tax increases and price hikes for gasoline and other necessities. The strikes and protests have clearly demonstrated the enormous potential social power of the working class. That power can and must be mobilized in the workers' own interests, to beat back the government's attacks but also to open up the possibility of a counteroffensive against the entire capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. A major obstacle to such a fightback, however, is the official leadership of the trade unions—both the pro-PASOK leadership of GSEE and ADEDY and the Stalinist-controlled PAME—which promotes class collaboration and Greek nationalism, thus tying the working class to their exploiters.

While seething anger at the base has forced the PASOK union bureaucrats to call strikes, they have repeatedly expressed their support for the government and its calls for sacrifices. ADEDY leader Papaspyros said: "The situation is hard for all of us, for the economy, for the government, for the working people, for the trade unions. Continuous analysis and evaluation is needed from all of us" (quoted in [Athens daily] *To Vima*, 14 February), while GSEE refused to take part in the strikes on April 21 and 22. The trade-union bureaucracy seeks to rally working-class support for the government by trading on the lie that PASOK is some kind of "socialist" party. In this they are aided by reformists like the Socialist Workers Party (SEK), who claim PASOK is a reformist workers party. It is no such thing. Since its inception, PASOK has been a bourgeois-populist party—an instrument of the class enemy no less than New Democracy.

It is necessary to forge a new, revolutionary leadership of the unions based on the understanding that there are no common interests between the proletariat and the capitalist bloodsuckers. Workers must fight for what we need, not for what the bosses say they can afford. The Greek capitalist class has brought the country to the brink of bankruptcy and is now determined to make the working class pay for the economic crisis. We say no! To hell with the government's "stability program"!

The kind of class-struggle leadership that we seek to build would fight for a series of transitional demands which, as Trotsky explained in the Transitional Program written in 1938, start from the current consciousness of the working class and its daily struggles against the bosses and the government and lead to the goal of proletarian revolution. According to a 21 March article in [national newspaper] *Eleutherotypia*: "The increase in unemployment exceeded 150,000 people at the end of 2009. In fact, it is much higher if you count those that work only a few hours per week." In the same article, Labor Minister Andreas Loverdos estimated that unemployment will shoot up to 12 percent in March. In reality, unemployment is higher still. "GSEE asserts that the [government] statistic of 11.3 percent is in real terms approaching 17.5 percent and the number of unemployed is 800,000 people" ([Athens daily] *Kathimerini*, 21 April). Unemployment has hit women and youth hardest. According to the National Statistics Service, unemployment is four times higher for women and around 25.8 percent among youth.

To combat mass unemployment, it is necessary to demand the sharing of available work, with no loss of pay, and a massive program of public works. To protect even their current living standards—already among the lowest in Europe—workers must demand that wages be indexed to inflation. To unmask the exploitation, robbery and fraud of the capitalist owners and the swindles of the banks, Trotsky argued that workers should demand that the capitalists open their books "to reveal to all members of society that unconscionable squandering of human labor which is the result of capitalist anarchy and the naked pursuit of profits." Raising the call for the expropriation of branches of industry vital for national existence, or the most parasitic of the capitalist rulers, Trotsky underlined that such a demand must necessarily be linked to the fight for the seizure of power by the working class, as against the reformist misleaders for whom the call for nationalization was merely a prescription for bailing out capitalist enterprises.

In opposition to the capitalists and their reformist agents, Trotsky argued:

> "If capitalism is incapable of satisfying the demands inevitably arising from the calamities generated by itself, then let it perish. 'Realizability' or 'unrealizability' is in the given instance a question of the relationship of forces, which can be decided only by the struggle. By means of this struggle, no matter what its immediate practical successes may be, the workers will best come to understand the necessity of liquidating capitalist slavery."

Down With National Chauvinism! For Workers' Unity Against the Bosses!

The fight to mobilize the working class in struggle for its class interests must include a struggle against all forms of discrimination. Key to forging the unity of the working class is the struggle against the racist oppression of immigrants. Immigrant workers, from Albania, South Asia, Africa and elsewhere, are a key component of the working class in Greece who must be drawn into common struggle alongside their Greek class brothers and sisters. To prevent the capitalists' scapegoating of foreign workers for the economic crisis, the workers movement must fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants! No deportations!

The virulent racism of the Greek capitalist state was recently demonstrated at the Independence Day parade in Athens on March 25, when a Greek special forces unit was filmed chanting racist slogans against Albanians, Macedonians and Turks. The video was later posted on YouTube and led to protests by Albanians in Athens. Chauvinism toward its Balkan neighbors and toward national minorities within its own borders is used by the Greek bourgeoisie, as it is by all the bourgeoisies in the region, to keep the working classes at each others' throats and to preserve the rule of capital. In our founding declaration the Trotskyist Group of Greece noted: "The defense of the rights of oppressed nationalities and immigrants is the only means by which the proletariat, consisting of workers of different ethnicities, can be united in the struggle for socialist revolution." Recognizing that the Macedonian question is a test of the authenticity of any group claiming to be internationalist in Greece, we wrote: "The TGG defends the national rights of the Macedonian minority in Greece, including their right to set up their own state or unite with the existing state of Macedonia. *For full democratic rights for national minorities in Greece! For a Balkan socialist federation!*"

AFP

Desperate immigrants seek to reach Greek island, May 2009.

Down With the Bosses' EU! For a Socialist United States of Europe!

The PASOK government's austerity program is a taste of what the bosses across Europe have in store for the working class as they seek to drive up the rate of profit. The condition for an EU/IMF "rescue package" for the Greek capitalists is a massive attack on the Greek workers.

As Marxists we stand in implacable opposition to the EU, an imperialist trade bloc within which the conflicting inter-

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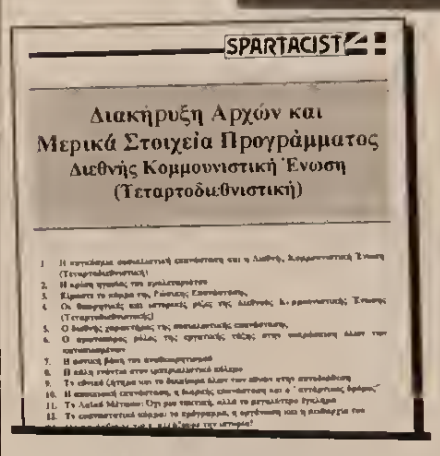
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Defend the Palestinian People!

tgraham

London, December 2008: Protest against Zionist mass murder in Gaza.

Free the Anti-Zionist Protesters! Drop the Charges Now!

Britain

The following article appeared in Workers Hammer *No. 210 (Spring 2010), newspaper of our comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain.*

WORKERS HAMMER

We print below a 13 March letter sent to the Home Office by the Partisan Defence Committee, a class-struggle, legal and social defence organisation associated with the Spartacist League. The letter protests the conviction and jailing of youth, mainly Muslims, who took part in London protests against Israel's war on Gaza a little over a year ago. There will likely be more such sentences as more cases come before the courts.

Comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain and other International Communist League (ICL) sections internationally participated in protests while the Zionist mass murder machine pounded the Gaza ghetto in air assaults followed by a devastating ground invasion, terrorising and killing Palestinian men, women and children. The ICL called for the working class internationally to stand for military defence of Hamas without giving that reactionary Islamic fundamentalist outfit one iota of political support. We demanded: Defend the Palestinian people! All Zionist troops and settlers out of the West Bank and East Jerusalem!

Unlike the Zionists and indeed the anti-Semitic Islamic fundamentalists, we do not equate the Zionist state with the Hebrew-speaking people, who have the right to self-determination as well as the Palestinian people. The Israeli/Palestinian conflict is one of interpenetrated peoples: two peoples laying claim to the same piece of land. Under capitalism, the exercise of national self-determination by one will necessarily be at the expense of the other. As long as the national principle prevails, the oppression of the Palestinians, who are the weaker side, can only worsen. As Marxists we seek to bring the class question to the fore, insisting on the need for proletarian revolutionary parties to fight for workers revolutions to shatter the Zionist state from within and to sweep away the mullahs, colonels, sheikhs and all the other capitalist rulers. Defence of those subjugated by the imperialists around the globe demands the pursuit of class struggle in Britain, the U.S. and other imperialist centres, pointing towards a proletarian struggle for power.

For Arab/Hebrew workers revolution! For a socialist federation of the Near East!

* * *

We protest the outrageous convictions and sentences meted out to youth arrested during the December 2008-January 2009 London protests against Israel's slaughter in Gaza. Reportedly of 119 arrested, some 26 have so far been sentenced and 22 sent to jail for terms ranging from eight months to two-and-a-half years, for such trivial acts as throwing placards. The arrests followed months of surveillance by the police, who descended on homes like stormtroopers in dawn raids during which family members were handcuffed in separate rooms.

These youth, almost all Muslims and many under 20 years old, were expressing justified rage at the bloodbath carried out by the Zionists in Gaza. Israel's war left 1,400 Palestinians dead and thousands injured, and reduced most of Gaza—already essentially a concentration camp surrounded by an electrified fence, a sealed border with Egypt, and the Mediterranean Sea—to ash and rubble. The jailings for protesting this atrocity underline British imperialism's solidarity with the Zionist butchers.

Judge John Denniss, in handing down the sentences at Isleworth Crown Court in Middlesex, has stated his intent to send a message of "deterrence." The message, broadcast loud and clear in the convictions and sentences, is one of naked state racism otherwise known as the government's "war on terror," which is an anti-Muslim witch hunt. In fact the judge reportedly relied on the precedent of the draconian sentences handed out to young Asians jailed for defending their communities from rampaging fascists in Bradford in 2001. Then too such "lessons" were delivered in the form of six-year prison terms for throwing stones. The fruit of this poison relentlessly dished up by the Blair and Brown Labour governments is the growth of the fascist BNP and their spin-offs, the English Defence League, who parade their anti-Muslim filth.

We demand: *Free the jailed protesters now! Drop all the charges!*■

---

ests of the major European bourgeois states are expressed. The EU is also a vehicle for the European capitalists to cooperate with each other against the working class and against immigrants. Our opposition to the EU, based on proletarian internationalism, is counterposed to the attacks by the Greek Communist Party (KKE) on the EU, which are based on gross capitulation to Greek nationalism. In a 17 April article in *Rizospastis*, the KKE blatantly expresses concern that the PASOK government might be undermining Greece's defense and worries about its borders with Turkey in the Aegean Sea, saying that KKE leader Aleka Papariga "repeated the worries of her party that the country's deeper incorporation into the imperialist organizations and their plans has prepared the ground for compromises at the expense of the sovereign rights of the country and its defense capability." She added that "now we worry additionally for the Aegean Sea." And while the KKE-dominated PAME trade-union federation raises class-against-class slogans such as "Either with capital or with the workers," it simultaneously appeals for patriotism in banners proclaiming, "Rising Up Against Impoverishment of the People Is Patriotism." Such nationalism is poisonous to class consciousness and is counterposed to proletarian internationalism. It serves to pit workers in Greece against workers in other countries and reinforces anti-immigrant racism. Any effective struggle against the bosses' attacks must begin with the understanding that the workers have no country. What is needed is international workers solidarity across the EU against capital.

The EU was originally established as an adjunct of NATO as the U.S. sought to strengthen West Europe against the Soviet Union. Today it is an unstable adjunct to the economic, military and political priorities of the European capitalists. The International Communist League uniquely fought to the last for military defense of the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of East Europe against imperialism and internal counterrevolution. We fought for workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies whose appeasement of imperialism undermined the defense of the workers states. That is today our program for the remaining deformed workers states—China, Vietnam, Cuba and North Korea.

The current world economic crisis is further powerful confirmation of the Marxist analysis of capitalist society and the need for socialist revolution to do away with the boom-bust cycle of capitalism and establish a rational, planned economy where production is for human need, not for profits for a handful of super-rich exploiters. No amount of tinkering with the existing system can wrench it into serving the needs of the proletariat and the oppressed.

As working people face ruin, the most that reformist groups like the SEK can put forward are pathetic appeals to the PASOK government to "tax the rich." Such schemes, advanced by reformists like the SEK, posit the possibility of radically redistributing wealth without getting rid of the capitalist system. The bourgeoisie has at its disposal cops, courts and troops—the armed bodies of men that constitute the core of the capitalist state—to wage war upon the working class in order to drive up profits. What's needed is a socialist revolution to overthrow the capitalist state and replace it with a workers state that will lay the basis for building a socialist society. For that you need to build a revolutionary workers party—a party like Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks—which will fight for a workers government. The TGG, Greek sympathizing section of the ICL, seeks to build such a party.■

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Britain...

(continued from page 12)

outrageous charges of "conspiracy to commit violent disorder" (*Morning Star*, 22 March). We say: Drop the charges against Weyman Bennett and all anti-fascist protesters!

Fascists are paramilitary shock troops dedicated to racist terror who aim to smash the organisations of the working class. BNP and EDL provocations must be met with massive protests, centred on the trade unions mobilised in defence of Muslims, immigrants and all their intended victims. However, Marxists understand that the decaying capitalist system breeds the social conditions for the growth of the fascists, thus the struggle against fascism is inseparable from the fight for socialist revolution. Mobilising the social power of the multiethnic working class in a fight for jobs and for the rights of immigrants and minorities is anathema to the pro-capitalist trade union bureaucracy, which aims to keep the unions tied to the capitalist order. The fascists have intervened heavily into the chauvinist strikes against foreign workers that began at Lindsey oil refinery in January 2009 under the slogan of "British jobs for British workers." This has long been a rallying cry of the fascists (see "Down With Reactionary Strikes Against Foreign Workers!" *Workers Hammer* No. 206, Spring 2009 [printed in *WV* No. 930, 13 February 2009]).

Disgracefully, these strikes were championed by the Socialist Party [affiliated with Socialist Alternative in the U.S.], as well as by the Unite trade union bureaucracy and by Bob Crow, leader of the RMT [Rail, Maritime and Transport union]. These unions—which consist of white, black and Asian workers—have enormous potential power that can hit the capitalists where it hurts. But Crow and the leadership of Unite have kept the lid on class struggle under Labour and the Unite bureaucrats have done their utmost to sell out their members who are on strike against British Airways [see "Shut Down Heathrow Airport! Victory to the British Airways Strike!" *WV* No. 955, 26 March].

Unions: Defend Immigrants!

Responsibility for the racist climate that has bolstered the fascists rests squarely with the Labour governments of the last 13 years. Under Labour, the imperialist occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan and the "war on terror" at home elevated anti-Muslim racism to unprecedented levels. Liberal journalist Yasmin Alibhai-Brown in her *Independent* column (8 March) bitterly complains that the British establishment "has surpassed its previous disgraceful record," treating Muslims as "contemptible creatures, devalued humans." The indifference of Gordon Brown (and Tony Blair) to the countless Iraqis killed and indiscriminately bombed, Alibhai-Brown says, only confirms that "native Iraqis are grains of sand to those who executed the imperial war." Even while the press is filled with revelations showing that "terror suspects" are routinely tortured abroad with the connivance of the British secret services, Muslim youth in Britain are being served with serious prison sentences for protesting against the murderous Israeli attack on Gaza last year (see "Free the Anti-Zionist Protesters!" [reprinted on page 9]).

Labour removed some of the most basic rights from asylum seekers, replacing meagre welfare benefits with food vouchers. Among other things, those incarcerated in detention centres are denied access to healthcare; other asylum seekers have been "dispersed" to sink estates [impoverished housing projects] such as Glasgow's Red Road flats where in early March a Russian family—Serge Serykh, his wife Tatiana and her son—tragically threw themselves to their deaths from a tower block, having been refused leave to remain in Britain. This tragedy is not unusual, as *Guardian* columnist Deborah Orr points out, noting "the fact that the three had to chuck down a large wardrobe before they jumped, to break the anti-suicide netting that had been installed, is an indication that they were not the only people in the vicinity who were considered to be in danger of finding their lives intolerable" ("Who Is Really to Blame for the Glasgow Suicides?" *Guardian*, 11 March).

Britain's "flexible labour market" is heavily dependent on immigrant workers who work for pitiful wages in a climate of racist hostility. The sub-human conditions endured by workers in the meat processing industry—which is worth hundreds of millions of pounds and employs almost 90,000 people—was the subject of a report by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. A *Guardian* article, titled "'I'm Not a Slave, I Just Can't Speak English'—Life in the Meat Industry," summarised the condition of these workers, many of whom are immigrants, predominantly from Eastern Europe, saying:

> "Pregnant women being forced to stand for long hours in factory production lines without breaks, or perform heavy lifting under threat of the sack; meat factory workers having frozen hamburgers 'like stones' thrown at them by line managers; women with heavy periods being refused toilet breaks so that they bled on their clothes on the production lines; workers with bladder problems refused breaks so that they urinated on themselves, workers exposed to verbal and physical abuse."
>
> —*Guardian*, 13 March

The unions must organise immigrant workers and demand equal pay at the highest going rate for all work, ***no matter who does it!*** Down with reactionary strikes against foreign workers! No deportations! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

Under the slogan of Karl Marx, "Workers of all countries unite!", immigrant workers from Eastern Europe must become a bridge to proletarian internationalist opposition to the European Union, a hosses' conglomerate designed to bludgeon the multiethnic working classes of all Europe.

No Vote to Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition!

Following a long period when it seemed likely that Labour would lose big in the general election, in recent months the Tory lead has been narrowing. At the mere hint of a rise in Labour's fortunes, the reformist left—including Workers Power and the SWP—jumped to attention, calling for a vote to the rotten Labour Party, to "keep the Tories out." But calling for a vote to Labour in 2010 is hard to stomach for many. Notably it caused something of an uproar in the ranks of the SWP, an organisation that, since its inception over half a century ago, has voted Labour without fail. The SWP cites the age-old excuse that "over the last 50 years the majority of working class voters, between 50 and 60.percent, consistently vote Labour. Just over 4 million trade unionists are affiliated to Labour—the unions remain the biggest source of funds for the party." Moreover, these consummate Labourites assert that: "To sit in a canteen, staff room or office and say there's no difference between the Tories and Labour cuts you off from some of the best people around you. You will look like you are some sect on the fringe." Heaven forbid. Better to vote for the party of imperialist occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan, the party which lavished benefits on the City bankers and which is running on its willingness to shove massive public spending cuts down the throats of working people.

The SWP is also supporting the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (Tusc). One doesn't have to be a Marxist to be repulsed by Tusc, which upholds the chauvinist strikes against foreign workers and counts among its luminaries prison officers' leader Brian Caton. Tusc is the successor to tbe No2EU coalition formed by the Socialist Party and RMT rail union leader Bob Crow for the European Parliament elections last year. We said "No Vote to No2EU," whose campaign consisted of chauvinist protectionism. As a 22 May 2009 article on *BBC News* online put it: "NO2EU was born out of the 'British jobs for British workers' protests at the Lindsey oil refinery and its aim is to provide working class voters and trade union members with a left wing alternative to the British National Party." Today Tusc's list of candidates includes Keith Gibson of the Socialist Party, who played a leading role in the strikes at Lindsey. Moreover the Socialist Party and Bob Crow appear to decide who is eligible to join Tusc according to whether or not they supported the Lindsey strikes and/or the No2EU coalition. An article by the Socialist Party informs us that the SWP's admission to Tusc was "not automatic" and explains:

> "Bob Crow, reflecting the response of RMT militants as last year's Lindsey strike unfolded, immediately and rightly condemned those 'misrepresenting the strikers as xenophobic—a posh word for racist' (in a letter to The Guardian, 6 February 2009). The SWP, on the other hand, criticised the strikes as 'nationalist'.
>
> "The SWP took a similar stance towards No2EU, the electoral body which was supported not just by the union tops but a big majority of RMT activists. These and other political mistakes by the SWP will not make winning support for TUSC easier inside the RMT, and other unions too."
>
> —*Socialist*, 3 February

The SWP tried to have it both ways on the Lindsey strike, claiming to oppose the slogan of "British jobs for British workers" while petitioning in the unions for support to the demands of the strike committee, which included a version of local jobs for local workers.

The Tusc leadership allowed the SWP to join, because workers "would naturally want to see the widest possible unity," but both the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) and Workers Power, who applied to stand candidates under the Tusc umbrella, were turned down. As a condition of admission both groups were asked to provide membership figures, details of any members they have on union national executive committees who would support Tusc and a statement of "what recommendation did your organisation give, if any, on how to vote in the 2009 European elections" (letter from Tusc to CPGB, 3 February, published in *Weekly Worker*, 11 February). The CPGB answered that they did not call for a vote to No2EU, because it wasn't for "working class unity on a European level"...so they voted Labour!

Right: Poisonous slogan at construction workers demonstration, Westminster, February 3. Far right: RMT union leader Bob Crow (center) at launch of No2EU election campaign, which supported chauvinist strikes.

Workers Hammer photos

Penny Krantz

March 20: Police attack United Against Fascism protest against fascist English Defence League provocation in Bolton.

WORKERS HAMMER
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CORRECTION

In the article "ILWU: Don't Handle Scab Borax!" (WV No. 956, 9 April) we wrote, "A significant factor in the labor statesmen's sell-out of the [1995 Australian miners'] Weipa struggle was their desire to defuse the situation for the benefit of the Labor Party in elections that year." Actually, the federal elections occurred on 2 March 1996.

The CPGB will of course vote for Tusc anyway, as well as for "Labour candidates who are prepared to call for an unconditional and immediate withdrawal of all British troops from Afghanistan and Iraq, and who pledge to oppose all cuts in public services and benefits" (*Weekly Worker*, 11 February).

In a recent split, the SWP lost three senior cadre—Chris Nineham, John Rees and Lindsey German, who criticised the SWP's failure to build a mass electoral vehicle to replace old Labour. In her 13 February resignation statement, German, convenor of [the SWP-brokered] Stop the War [Coalition], opined: "I believe the party leadership has systematically moved away from the perspective applied in the past decade, which has been so successful in building the anti capitalist and anti war movements." Upholding the Respect coalition, an attempt to "try to build a left electoral alternative involving working class people, including Muslims," as "a courageous thing to do," German laments "the abandonment of the methods of building pioneered by [SWP founder] Tony Cliff," which he termed "bending the stick." In the recent period the SWP has certainly bent the stick in every conceivable direction. But the SWP failed to grow out of the Socialist Alliance, the Respect coalition or the Stop the War Coalition and overall its numbers have declined, while the Socialist Party's several-years-long campaign for a "new mass workers party" has yet to get off the ground.

In the aftermath of counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union in 1991-92, these reformists have followed the rightward shifts of the mass reformist parties [in Europe], notably the Labour Party, dropping any remaining lip service to socialism that might taint them by association with the Russian October Revolution. Yet despite their opportunist efforts they failed to cash in. The restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state, and in the deformed workers states in Eastern Europe was a historic defeat for the working masses of the entire world in material terms. This counterrevolution, which ushered in the bourgeois ideological offensive that "communism is dead," was *supported* by both the SWP and the Socialist Party.

The SWP as a tendency originated out of the anti-communist Cold War hysteria that accompanied the Korean War of 1950-53. Its founder, the late Tony Cliff, reneged on the Trotskyist position of unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union as well as the Chinese and North Korean deformed workers states against imperialist attack. This was a cowardly capitulation to the British bourgeoisie and to the Labour government that sent troops to Korea. (See "The Bankruptcy of 'New Class' Theories" [*Spartacist* No. 55 (English-language edition), Autumn 1999]). The SWP actually played its small part in ***helping to create*** today's political climate of post-Soviet reaction. In August 1991 when Boris Yeltsin's imperialist-backed forces of counterrevolution staged a countercoup in Moscow, the SWP triumphantly proclaimed: "Communism has collapsed," describing this as a fact that "should have every socialist rejoicing" (*Socialist Worker*, 31 August 1991).

We in the ICL fought with all our resources against capitalist restoration. During the unfolding political revolution in East Germany in 1989-90, we unconditionally opposed capitalist reunification with imperialist West Germany. We fought for political revolution in the East and socialist revolution in the West. Against Boris Yeltsin's forces of counterrevolution in Moscow in August 1991, we headlined: "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" We upheld the Trotskyist programme of unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union and the East European deformed workers states, and for workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies and replace them with regimes based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism. This is the programme we apply today to the remaining deformed workers states—China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam.

Counterrevolution in the Soviet Union has led to a profound retrogression in proletarian consciousness. Although it is uneven throughout the world, today even the most politically conscious workers in the capitalist countries by and large do not identify their struggles with the goal of socialism. Our task is to swim against the stream of today's reactionary climate and to forge the nucleus of a revolutionary vanguard party. As Trotsky noted in his article "Stalinism and Bolshevism" (1937):

> "Great political defeats inevitably provoke a reconsideration of values, generally occurring in two directions. On the one hand the true vanguard, enriched by the experience of defeat, defends with tooth and nail the heritage of revolutionary thought and on this basis attempts to educate new cadres for the mass struggle to come. On the other hand the routinists, centrists, and dilettantes, frightened by defeat, do their best to destroy the authority of revolutionary tradition and go backward in their search of a 'New Word'."

The British SWP's "socialism" only ever amounted to pressuring the Labour Party and trade union bureaucracy who are wedded to British imperialism and to parliament. The old Labour Party was born out of a unique situation in which Britain's industrial proletariat was a majority of the population. Thus Labour had a sufficiently large working-class vote to get elected to parliament as a majority government. This is no longer the case. As a reflection of Britain's relative economic decline and also a product of the de-industrialisation policies pursued relentlessly both by Margaret Thatcher's Tory governments and by New Labour since 1997, the majority of the population is no longer proletarian. Under Tony Blair in the 1990s the Labour Party began to sever its historic links to the trade union movement (while trying to keep the unions' financial contributions to the party) and to cast around for the support of other social layers, particularly those who had swung to the Tories in the 1980s.

It was the political bankruptcy of old Labour that led to the rise of New Labour, which now stands discredited among workers after a prolonged period at the helm of a country in an economic mess. New Labour is a product of decades of attacks—including by Labour governments in the 1960s and 70s—on working people to break the power of the unions in an effort to improve the competitiveness of British capitalism. Labour was replaced by the Thatcher government in 1979, which prepared a showdown with the miners, culminating in the heroic year-long strike of 1984-85. Defeat in this battle was far from inevitable and was the result of the treachery of the Labourite union leaders, particularly the "left" leaders of the unions in rail and the docks who refused to organise solidarity strikes alongside the miners. The difficult conditions under which the British workers struggle today —including the anti-union laws—are the legacy of the defeat of that struggle and the fact that under the New Labour governments the leadership of the unions have refused to rock the boat with class struggle.

The British capitalist order is based on the dominance of the City of London and the middle-class English Home Counties [surrounding London] over the former industrial heartlands of the north of England as well as the national oppression of Scotland and Wales. We oppose the reactionary United Kingdom, which is centred on the archaic institutions of the monarchy, the House of Lords and the established churches. We seek to build a multiethnic revolutionary workers party that fights to overthrow Westminster rule and replace it with a workers government. Abolish the monarchy, the established churches and the House of Lords! British troops out of Northern Ireland, Iraq and Afghanistan! For an Irish workers republic within a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles!■

WV Photo

January 1992 Spartacist protest in New York City against Boris Yeltsin's visit with Wall Street paymasters. ICL uniquely fought against capitalist counterrevolution, for workers political revolution.

Auto Plant...

(continued from page 4)

Swooping in like vultures at the union's February membership meeting were the political bandits of David North's Socialist Equality Party, who urged the workers to "break with the UAW," which they consider a "business." This is music to the ears of Toyota, which has worked hard to keep the UAW out of their non-union plants in the U.S.

It is fatal to identify the sellout bureaucracy with the union as a whole. The answer is not to abandon the unions, the basic defense organizations of the working class against the bosses. What is needed is a political struggle to replace the "labor lieutenants of capital" with a leadership armed with a class-struggle program, one that breaks labor's chains to the Democratic Party. Such a leadership would prepare the workers for the vitally necessary battles against America's capitalist masters—from organizing the unorganized to the fight against black oppression and anti-immigrant bigotry.

There is no simple trade-union solution to the crisis in auto that has now claimed the jobs of thousands of NUMMI workers and hundreds of thousands worldwide. It is the product of the entire anarchic and outmoded capitalist system of production for profit, whose inbuilt crises repeatedly and increasingly throw masses of workers on the scrap heap. As we wrote in "Auto Bailout Means Union Busting" (*WV* No. 931, 27 February 2009):

> "The fight for jobs is equivalent to the fight against the devastation of America's working people. What is necessary is a massive program of public works at union wages to rebuild the dams, bridges and roads that are in an advanced stage of decay; to tear down and replace the crumbling public schools in the nation's inner cities; to create an America that looks like a place that its inhabitants could survive in. It is necessary to call an end to the layoffs by shortening the workweek at no loss in pay, as part of the struggle for jobs for all.
>
> "All must have full access to medical care at no cost and unemployment benefits must be extended until there are jobs, with all pensions completely guaranteed by the government. Such demands, the elements of which were laid out in the 1938 Transitional Program, the founding document of the Trotskyist Fourth International, will not be granted by the rapacious capitalist rulers. The capitalist state exists to defend the rule and profits of the bourgeoisie. It cannot be reformed or wielded to serve the interests of working people. The catastrophe of joblessness, threatening the disintegration of the working class, can be effectively fought only by a workers movement led by those committed to the struggle for socialist revolution."

The boom-and-bust cycles of capitalism will not end short of proletarian revolution that takes power out of the hands of the irrational capitalist ruling class and creates a workers state based on a planned, socialized economy. Only the achievement of a world socialist order can eliminate the age-old problems of poverty, scarcity and want. It is the purpose of the Spartacist League to help forge the multiracial revolutionary workers party necessary to lead the fight for a workers government that will seize the wealth produced by labor and use it for the benefit of the many, not the profits of a few.■

WV Photo

August 1983: UAW members calling for militant action at protest against disbanding of Fremont Local 1364.

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Reactionary Tory/Liberal Government Formed

British Trotskyists Said:

No Vote to Labour, Party of Racism and War

Reuters

Kaler/Demotix

Getty

Above: Thousands march against cuts at London hospital, February 27. Above left: Labour's Gordon Brown leaves 10 Downing Street, May 11. Above right: Tory David Cameron (at right, with Liberal Democrat Nick Clegg) moves in.

Troops Out of Iraq, Afghanistan! Down With Racist "War on Terror"!

On May 6, after 13 years of rule on behalf of Britain's capitalist ruling class, the British Labour Party suffered a stinging electoral defeat, bringing to an ignominious end the government of heretofore prime minister Gordon Brown. With no party achieving a majority—the first such "hung Parliament" since 1974—a coalition government was cobbled together between the Conservative Party (Tories) of David Cameron, who now becomes prime minister, and the Liberal Democrats.

WORKERS HAMMER

The Cameron government takes office amid a burgeoning financial crisis in Europe. With public spending now equivalent to roughly half the country's national output, the new British government is promising brutal cutbacks in public services and austerity on a par with those being forced upon working people in Greece. (More details will likely emerge later this month when, as is the custom, the Queen presents the new government's legislative agenda to Parliament.) That program parallels the anti-working-class perspective put forward as well by the Labour Party. This was made clear in the following article written during the election campaign, which is reprinted from *Workers Hammer* No. 210 (Spring 2010), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League.

* * *

From the standpoint of the working people, it makes no difference whether Gordon Brown's Labour Party or David Cameron's Tories win the general election. Both parties are committed to the brutal imperialist occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan and to the "war on terror" against Muslims at home, while each strives to outdo the other in racist hostility to immigrants. Above all, both are committed to fleecing the working people to pay for the enormous deficit in Britain's public finances.

The 2008 financial meltdown and the worldwide crisis that followed had a devastating impact on the British economy. The burden, which is being heaped onto the British working class, is proportionally higher than elsewhere largely because Britain's financial sector is so bloated relative to the rest of the economy. With public borrowing as a share of national income forecast to be the highest in the G20 group of the largest world economies, according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies, and a budget deficit that is higher than that of Greece, the European Commission warned that Britain must take tougher measures to cut its deficit by 2015.

Both Labour and Tories know that to tell the truth about the state of the economy would be suicidal in electoral terms. But whoever forms the next government will implement massive public spending cuts and chancellor Alistair Darling [British finance minister] has admitted that Labour will cut "deeper and tougher" than Margaret Thatcher did in the 1980s. Since the beginning of the present economic crisis, half a million people have lost their jobs and according to one estimate a British property is repossessed every eleven minutes. Economic analyst John Lanchester sums up the situation saying: "We had the longest period of sustained economic growth since records began, followed by the longest period of sustained economic contraction since records began, all of it under the leadership of a government that repeatedly and explicitly promised 'an end to boom and bust'" ("The Great British Economy Disaster," *London Review of Books*, 11 March). Lanchester predicts cuts amounting to around eleven per cent across the board, rising to 16 per cent in certain areas, which he notes are of a magnitude never before achieved in this country, while "a two-year freeze in NHS [National Health Service] spending—which is what Labour have talked about—would be its sharpest contraction in 60 years." Meanwhile the Institute for Fiscal Studies estimates spending cuts of up to 25 per cent.

We say: No vote to Labour, party of the City [of London] bankers and of imperialist murder and pillage in Iraq and Afghanistan, of vile racism against immigrants and minorities and contempt for the working class at home. When Labour won a landslide victory in 1997, in contrast to the euphoria amongst the reformist left, we vehemently opposed any support to Tony Blair's Labour Party. Our 21 April 1997 election statement titled "For a Revolutionary Workers Party! For a Federation of Workers Republics in the British Isles!" said:

> "The Spartacist League/Britain says unequivocally: No vote to New Labour in the general election! New Labour is pledged to maintaining the sickening reality of life under capitalism—keeping the unions in shackles, slashing welfare programmes, waging war on workers, racial minorities and immigrants, women and youth—everybody who is consigned to the bottom of the heap by rotting British capitalism. Blair's 'contract with Britain' is a pact with the bloated City of London, where vast wealth is generated from profits extracted through exploitation of workers around the world."
>
> —*Workers Hammer* No. 156, May/June 1997

The working class needs a party that fights for its own class interests. We fight for a multiethnic revolutionary workers party, part of a Leninist-Trotskyist international, dedicated to the task of fighting for socialist revolution to overthrow the capitalist order. Boom-and-bust cycles are endemic to the capitalist system itself, which is also the root cause of all exploitation and oppression. Fundamental change in the interests of the working people can only come about through revolutionary internationalist class struggle which must shatter the framework of capitalism worldwide. Socialist revolution will lay the basis for rationally planned economies based on production for need, not for profit, and for a qualitative development of the productive forces, opening the road to the elimination of poverty, scarcity and want and to the creation of an egalitarian socialist society.

Labour Government Racism Bolsters BNP

The run-up to the election has been marked by an ominous increase in fascist activity. On the one hand the British National Party (BNP) has been running a high-profile election campaign, spreading racist filth against immigrants and Muslims, while on the streets the English Defence League (EDL) has been staging violent anti-Muslim provocations in various cities. A protest by Unite Against Fascism (UAF) against the EDL in Bolton on 20 March was viciously attacked by the police, who arrested prominent leftists and anti-fascists. UAF leader and Socialist Workers Party (SWP) member Weyman Bennett was held by police on

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WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 960 C-701 4 June 2010

Defend North Korea Against U.S. Imperialism!

MAY 31—Seizing on the March 26 sinking of a South Korean warship, the *Cheonan*, off North Korea's west coast, the Barack Obama administration and U.S. imperialism's junior partners in Seoul have sharply escalated their threats and provocations against North Korea. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, touring Asian capitals, denounced the incident as an "unacceptable provocation" by the North. South Korea's right-wing president, Lee Myung-bak, announced that his government is cutting off nearly all trade with North Korea and pressed for a United Nations Security Council resolution that could result in new sanctions. The U.S. and South Korea announced joint naval exercises, to be held in June, that would include training to intercept North Korean merchant ships accused of carrying "banned cargo."

As Marxists, our attitude regarding this affair is determined not by claims of who was responsible for the sinking, the cause of which is shrouded in mystery, but by *class* considerations: Despite being saddled with a nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy, North Korea is a workers state based on the overthrow of capitalist rule. It is in the vital interest of the proletariat internationally to stand for the unconditional military defense of North Korea against the capitalist South, U.S. and Japanese imperialism, and also against internal capitalist counterrevolution. This includes defending North Korea's development of nuclear weapons capacity.

The U.S. imperialists have tried to

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Defend the Palestinians!
Down With Blockade of Gaza!
Zionist Massacre at Sea

AFP

Reuters

AFP

Left: Injured victim of May 31 Israeli commando attack on Turkish ship *Mavi Marmara*, pictured above leaving Istanbul on May 22. Right: Attack in international waters killed at least nine people.

JUNE 1—"This was murder." These three words, spoken by Greta Berlin of the Free Gaza Movement, captured the horror perpetrated by elite naval units of the Israeli Zionist state when they descended from Black Hawk helicopters onto a civilian ship in international waters and began blasting away at its 700 passengers, mainly Turkish citizens, in a pre-dawn raid yesterday. At least nine people aboard the Turkish *Mavi Marmara*—the lead ship in a six-ship "Freedom Flotilla" carrying medicine, construction supplies and other goods to Gaza—were killed and dozens injured. Survivors of the attack were hauled off to prison in Israel or deported. We demand that the prisoners be freed, now!

The passengers aboard the aid flotilla were carrying out a courageous act of defiance of the Israeli embargo of the Gaza Strip, imposed in 2007 in order to collectively punish the Palestinian population for voting the Islamist Hamas into power. Gaza was already little more than a huge concentration camp, surrounded on all sides by an electrified fence, the sea or a fortified border with Egypt. But the embargo vastly deepened the misery of the 1.5 million people of Gaza, who now overwhelmingly rely on paltry food packages from United Nations relief agencies for survival. Israel slaughtered upwards of 1,300 Gaza residents—many of them women and children—beginning in late 2008, as round-the-clock air assaults followed by a ground invasion of over 10,000 troops reduced much of the Gaza ghetto to ash and rubble. And just today, an Israeli airstrike killed three people in Gaza.

The Israeli government has denounced the flotilla participants as "violent extremists" and "terrorists." The chauvinist capitalist rulers of the Zionist garrison state deem any defense of the subjugated Palestinian people as "terrorism." In this, they also take a cue from their American imperialist patrons, whose "war on terror" has been used—by the U.S. and other capitalist governments—to justify massacres and state terror against the oppressed around the world. In fact, the so-called "terrorists" in the flotilla included European parliamentarians and a retired U.S. diplomat as well as prominent authors and filmmakers. Israeli claims that the commandos opened fire only after being attacked by passengers are countered by numerous eyewitness accounts and belied by video taken at the time of the assault. In any case, as Greta Berlin put it, "People had the right to defend themselves against soldiers armed with machine guns."

From San Francisco and New York to Europe and the Near East, people took to the streets in outrage over the massacre. The Spartacist League is joining in the protests, as are sections of the International Communist League in Europe. In Istanbul, Turkey, demonstrators tried to storm the Israeli consulate. We say: Down with the starvation blockade of Gaza! Defend the Palestinian people! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories, including East Jerusalem!

Unrestrained terror against the Palestinians by the Israeli ruling class and its fascistic "settler" auxiliaries has always been

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All Israeli Troops, Settlers Out of the Occupied Territories!

On Haiti and Polemics

Massachusetts
15 May 2010

Workers Vanguard has often stated that Haiti has virtually no working class. I think it is important to be clear exactly what this means. Preliminarily, I did some research on www.economywatch.com/economic-statistics/country/Haiti and www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/1982.htm#econ.

Haiti does have a working class but it is very small and objectively weak. The assembly sector employed over 100,000 workers in the mid-1980s, but due to an embargo in the 1990s, it decreased to under 20,000. The number is likely far less after the recent earthquake which leveled many of the factories. What proletariat exists, is largely in the apparel industry, which accounts for nearly 1/10th of the GDP. The apparel industry is largely unskilled and low profit. What's largely missing in Haiti is a proletariat employed in basic infrastructure, core industries (coal, steel, electricity, transport, etc.) or high profit industries like auto or electronics. It has legalized unions, largely under the influence of Aristide populism, with not much of a left and nothing that comes close to a Trotskyist party. In a country of 9 million, with rampant unemployment and poverty, the social numbers and weight of the proletariat is marginal, limiting its ability to effect change through strikes, protests or revolution.

The key to Haiti, as you point out, lies in the Haitian diaspora (which employs many skilled workers and whose remittances account for nearly 25% of Haiti's GDP), the much stronger proletariat in neighboring countries, and the powerful proletariat in the imperialist centers.

This should not imply discounting the inhabitants of Haiti from playing a more direct role in shaping their own destiny and sparking struggles elsewhere. This should also not discount the possibility that the economy and social composition of Haiti may change in the future from imperialist investment, although this is uncertain given the global recession and at best would result in transforming Haiti into an even bigger sweatshop.

Haiti has a militant history, including the 1791 slave revolution. It has a history of political instability and there is currently a lot of anger at the government, which could spill over into protests against imperialist troops. It would be wrong to expect mass protests in the midst of the ruins and social collapse, but it would also be wrong to refuse to call for such protest, in Haiti and internationally. The exact nature of the protest would depend on the circumstances and the emphasis of the demands may differ, but the guiding light for Haiti and the rest of the neocolonial world remains permanent revolution.

Joel

* * *

12 May 2010

To the Editor, Workers Vanguard

The SL's support for the U.S. takeover in Haiti was shockingly inconsistent with all your previous practice, but your self-criticism failed to consider the internal cause for so sudden and outrageous a lapse. In my opinion as a decades-long subscriber to WV, this cause is not reformist contamination but the solipsism by which you have sought to shield yourselves from it.

The symptoms of this excessive inward focus are not at all diagnostic of incipient reformism—i.e. too-great openness to the engulfing mainstream. These symptoms are: a dismissive or hostile attitude to critics, press coverage of your "own" and of feuds with rivals beyond all reasonable proportion to their world-historic significance and the drive to distinguish the organization from rivals at any cost. Thus, where your bête-noir epigones the IG put a minus, you had to put a plus. Loss of perspective turned essential political polemic into a crusade against an enemy, justifying any and all arguments.

These deformations constitute a sad abdication of the valuable revolutionary leadership you could and should provide. You've been walking on one edge of the tightwire between being true to principle and open to others. Please take this opportunity to seek a proper balance.

Yours for the revolutionary party,
R. Freed

***WV* replies:**

We thank both our readers for their contributions. As we noted in repudiating our former social-imperialist position supporting the U.S. imperialist troop presence in Haiti, our correction lays the basis for political rectification (see "Repudiating Our Position on Haiti Earthquake—A Capitulation to U.S. Imperialism," *WV* No. 958, 7 May). However, we do not agree that what R. Freed calls "the drive to distinguish the organization from rivals," i.e., our practice of polemicizing against other leftist groups, is at the root of this betrayal of principle.

In repudiating our line on Haiti, we did not relinquish the struggle against fake socialists whose oppositional activity is firmly within the bounds of pressuring the capitalist state, preferably as administered by the Democratic Party. Nor are we about to accommodate outfits such as the Internationalist Group (IG), which sometimes likes to dress up its tailing of Latin American nationalists and militant-talking union bureaucrats with "Marxist" phraseology. As the ICL statement noted, the problem was that "instead of simply exposing the IG's Third Worldist fantasies, we concentrated in our polemics on zealous apologies for the U.S. imperialist military intervention, a position to the right of the IG." To renounce polemical struggle would be to renounce the fight for a Leninist vanguard party—the necessary instrument for leading the proletariat in socialist revolution—and to descend into wretched "family of the left" politics and its inevitable corollary, class collaborationism.

As James P. Cannon, the historic leader of American Trotskyism, stated in 1966, "If we disagree with other people, we have to say so! We have to make it clear *why* we disagree so that inquiring young people, looking for an organization to represent their aspirations and ideals, will know the difference between one party and another. Nothing is worse than muddying up differences when they concern fundamental questions" ("Don't Strangle the Party," reprinted in *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 38-39, Summer 1986). ■

TROTSKY

LENIN

For a Socialist United States of Europe

As Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained, there can be no capitalist European superstate or any lasting agreements among the imperialist bourgeoisies, which are nationally based and inevitably come into conflict with each other in the drive for profits and new areas of exploitation. As shown by the financial crisis wracking the European Union, economic and political agreements among the imperialists, which are first and foremost aimed against the working class, are inherently unstable, portending renewed conflict among rival capitalist states. The only road to ending capitalism's boom-bust economic cycles and its threat of new imperialist wars presaged by trade war is that of international proletarian revolution, which will lay the basis for transcending the outmoded nation-state through the construction of a world socialist economy.

From the standpoint of the economic conditions of imperialism—i.e., the export of capital and the division of the world by the "advanced" and "civilised" colonial powers—a United States of Europe, under capitalism, is either impossible or reactionary.

Capital has become international and monopolist. The world has been carved up by a handful of Great Powers, i.e., powers successful in the great plunder and oppression of nations....

A United States of Europe under capitalism is tantamount to an agreement on the partition of colonies. Under capitalism, however, no other basis and no other principle of division are possible except force. A multi-millionaire cannot share the "national income" of a capitalist country with anyone otherwise than "in proportion to the capital invested" (with a bonus thrown in, so that the biggest capital may receive more than its share). Capitalism is private ownership of the means of production, and anarchy in production. To advocate a "just" division of income on such a basis is sheer Proudhonism, stupid philistinism. No division can be effected otherwise than in "proportion to strength," and strength changes with the course of economic development.... Under capitalism the smooth economic growth of individual enterprises or individual states is impossible. Under capitalism, there are no other means of restoring the periodically disturbed equilibrium than crises in industry and wars in politics.

Of course, *temporary* agreements are possible between capitalists and between states. In this sense a United States of Europe is possible as an agreement between the *European* capitalists...but to what end? Only for the purpose of jointly suppressing socialism in Europe, of jointly protecting colonial booty *against* Japan and America, who have been badly done out of their share by the present partition of colonies, and the increase of whose might during the last fifty years has been immeasurably more rapid than that of backward and monarchist Europe, now turning senile.

—V.I. Lenin, "On the Slogan for a United States of Europe" (August 1915)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is June 1

No. 960 **4 June 2010**

The ILWU and TWIC

30 May 2010

To the editor:

The front-page article "Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!" in *Workers Vanguard* No. 958 (7 May) rightly exposes how the misleaders of the West Coast International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) collaborated with the capitalist state in the implementation of the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program. According to Homeland Security statistics, a whopping 35,000 maritime transportation workers have been disqualified under TWIC (and thus forced from their jobs), in addition to the unknown tens of thousands who dropped out of the workforce in order to avoid the risk of prosecution or deportation under TWIC "anti-terror" repression. Meanwhile, TWIC's immigration and criminal background checks have been imposed on twice the number originally projected by the government—a total of over 1.5 million workers.

While the front-page article pointed out that the ILWU bureaucracy called for "fair" implementation of the TWIC program, it's worth noting that some *two months after* the government's national compliance date of 15 April 2009 for TWIC cards, an ILWU Longshore Division Caucus meeting voted "to seek the abandonment of the TWIC program altogether" (*Dispatcher*, July/August 2009). At the same time, the union's pro-capitalist bureaucracy made it clear it had no intention of challenging the racist rulers' prerogative to wield their state power against the working class in the name of national security. So the Caucus cited as the reason for after-the-fact opposition to TWIC that "it does not actually improve port security" (see "Protest Conviction of Aaron Harrison! 'War on Terror' Frame-Up of Black Longshoreman," *WV* No. 949, 1 January).

As *Workers Vanguard* advocates, for the unions to become instruments of defense of the multiracial working class *against* the exploiting capitalist bosses and their government requires a political fight for a new leadership based on a class-struggle program whose purpose is to fight for a workers party and a workers government.

J.K.

MEMORIAL MEETING

A memorial meeting
in honor of
our comrade Joe Verret
will be held in Los Angeles
on June 12.

For more information, call
(213) 380-8239.

Remember Aiyana Stanley-Jones

Detroit Cops Kill Seven-Year-Old in Her Home

Family photo

She went to sleep with her grandmother in her family's home. Her father covered her with her favorite blanket before he retired for the evening. It was her last night. Her name was Aiyana, she was seven years old, and she was fatally shot by Detroit police in the early morning hours of May 16.

The cop killing of this black girl was no aberration, but in fact a particularly grotesque and stark example of the state of siege that now defines life in Detroit, especially for its black population. The cops, including members of the "Special Response Team" (SRT, Detroit's SWAT outfit), raided Aiyana's home in military fashion, supposedly to arrest a homicide suspect. The cops threw a flash grenade through a window, stormed the house and shot the child. Aiyana's grandmother, Mertilla Jones, testified at a news conference: "Soon as they hit the window, I hit the floor and went to reach for my granddaughter." Jones said that she saw the light leave her eyes: "I knew she was dead" (*New York Times*, 21 May). An attorney for the family, Geoffrey Fieger, noted that he had seen videotape showing that "a percussion grenade device was thrown through the front window and a shot was fired immediately from the outside from the porch" (CNN.com, 17 May).

The video exists because the cops busted into the house with an A&E (Arts and Entertainment) television crew filming for *The First 48* reality show in tow. The video is now the property of the Michigan State Police, who have been charged with "investigating" the cops' action. All this promises is the usual whitewash of one arm of the racist capitalist state by another. In fact, so desperate were they to cover up the killing that police *arrested the grieving Mertilla Jones* and held her for nearly 12 hours that Sunday, subjecting her to drug testing and a chemical test to detect any presence of gunpowder on her hands! Only afterwards was the name of the SRT officer who shot Aiyana leaked. Fieger has filed lawsuits in U.S. District Court and Wayne County Circuit Court claiming civil rights violations, gross negligence and conspiracy by police to hide the facts of the case. Aiyana's family deserves any recompense it seeks for its unspeakable loss.

Home invasions by the cops—unannounced, with weapons drawn—were already routine in Detroit. After one cop was killed and five others wounded on May 3 in an early morning raid on an abandoned house on the city's East Side, police spokesmen and black Democratic mayor David Bing ratcheted up calls to "fight crime" through jacking up police operations. The bosses' media did their part in whipping up an "anti-crime" frenzy. Tension was palpable, the result horrific.

This was only the immediate backdrop for the killing of Aiyana by the cops. Vicious racist police repression is the daily reality for the oppressed black masses of this devastated city. The auto industry once employed millions in the U.S., and the heavily black unionized workforce in Detroit was a vanguard of some of the most militant labor struggles in the country. It was Motor City, with comparatively decent wages won through hard struggle. The mass of black auto workers also represented a vital link between the power of the organized proletariat and the impoverished ghetto masses. Today, the auto industry and its union presence have been decimated by the capitalist owners of industry, abetted by a cravenly class-collaborationist union bureaucracy. This has left the city a hellhole of mass unemployment and desperate poverty, its black population all the more vulnerable to the repressive powers of the capitalist state (see "Reporter's Notebook: Devastation in Motor City," *WV* No. 929, 30 January 2009).

Not only in Detroit, but throughout inner cities and former industrial concentrations across the country, the economic whip of unemployment has been augmented by the vast expansion of police

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In Face of NYC Transit Layoffs
TWU Tops: Lieutenants in Capitalists' "War on Terror"

Pleading poverty on the heels of the capitalist financial meltdown, state and municipal governments across the country are cutting services to the bone, imposing sweeping layoffs and attacking pensions. This anti-labor offensive began at the top, when early last year the Obama White House showered hundreds of billions on its Wall Street patrons and engineered the bailout of Chrysler and GM by tearing up union gains won through decades of hard struggle. Now Democrats and Republicans alike at all levels of government are gunning for the public workers unions.

In New York City, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is slashing bus and subway routes and threatening mass layoffs, with over 200 subway station agents already out of a job, 275 more holding pink slips and 750 other transit workers facing the ax. Station agents play a vital role, from helping subway riders navigate the system to finding lost children and calling ambulances for the injured and ill. The leadership of Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 ought to be mobilizing the rank and file against the MTA bosses and their government higher-ups to fight for these jobs and for free mass transit. Instead, besides their usual practice of begging capitalist politicians in Albany and Washington for mercy (and, now, for more stimulus money), the Local 100 tops are pleading that station agents provide a "first line of defense" in the government's "war on terror."

March 4: TWU Local 100 president Samuelsen, with PBA cop "union" head Pat Lynch on his right, at rally for transit jobs.

This is as grotesque as it is dangerous. The "war on terror" is an all-purpose fiction pushed by the bloody U.S. ruling class to justify invasion and mass murder abroad and a vicious clampdown on the rights of the population at home—in the first place immigrants, but also black people and the labor movement. Unions and unionized workers have been *targets* of the "war on terror" from the outset. In December 2001, the leader of striking teachers in Middletown, New Jersey, was vilified as a "representative of the Taliban" and the strikers were clapped into jail. As we wrote at the time, "This should be an alarm bell to the entire labor movement about what the bosses' jingoist 'national unity' means" ("228 NJ Teachers Jailed for Striking," *WV* No. 771, 28 December 2001).

On March 4, the Local 100 bureaucracy staged the first of several rallies against the layoffs where the "war on terror" theme has been played to the hilt. Recently elected Local president John Samuelsen invited onto the stage capitalist Democratic Party politicians and Police Benevolent Association head Pat Lynch, as his predecessor Roger Toussaint regularly did. Lynch gave his stamp of approval to the TWU tops' campaign to enlist station agents as "anti-terror" auxiliaries to the cops. No wonder: It's the job of Lynch and his cop "union" to enforce "law and order" against blacks, immigrants and the unions. Lynch has no place on the TWU's rostrum! Cops out of the unions! Samuelsen even appealed directly to the Chair of the U.S. House Committee on Homeland Security, Mississippi Democrat Bennie Thompson, to pressure the MTA bosses to keep the station agents on the job as "eyes and ears" for the bosses' state (*Transport Workers Alert*, April 2010).

Acting as lieutenant in the reactionary "anti-terror" crackdown is second nature for Samuelsen, who is, after all, a former prison guard. Only weeks before the TWU's 2002 contract deadline, he complained about subcontractors employing immigrant day laborers who do not undergo background checks, ranting, "We don't know if they have a criminal background or anything about them." This racist bigotry is poison for the labor movement, and not least for the TWU with its integrated membership that includes workers from all parts of the world.

As part of the pro-Democrat, pro-imperialist AFL-CIO bureaucracy that supports the "war on terror," the TWU tops are hardly alone. Many union bureaucrats collaborated with the government in the implementation of the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program. In the name of "port security," TWIC requires port workers to undergo background checks and acquire identity cards to work. Since being rolled out in April 2009, it has caused a de facto purge of *tens of thousands* of port workers. Black and Latino workers, many of whom had been caught up in racist "war on drugs" dragnets in the past, have been especially hard hit by TWIC.

In one of his final writings, revolutionary Marxist Leon Trotsky observed: "The labor bureaucrats do their level best in words and deeds to demonstrate to the 'democratic' state how reliable and indispensible they are in peacetime and especially in time of war" ("Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay," 1940). Trotsky emphasized that to "turn the trade unions into the organs of the broad exploited masses and not the organs of a labor aristocracy" requires the "***complete and unconditional independence of the trade unions in relation to the capitalist state***." And that requires forging a new, class-struggle leadership.■

For the Right of Independence!

Colonial Referendum in Martinique and French Guiana

The following article is translated from Le Bolchévik *No. 191 (March 2010), newspaper of the Ligue Trotskyste de France, section of the International Communist League.*

LE BOLCHEVIK

Referendums were held on January 10 in the colonies of Martinique and French Guiana. The purpose was to promise greater autonomy under the terms of Article 74 of the French Constitution. The French state organized this referendum in order to promote a "renewed relationship with metropolitan France," as French president Sarkozy put it. A large majority in both countries voted "no," with just over half the registered voters participating.

The plebiscite had been announced in the wake of last year's protracted general strikes in Martinique and Guadeloupe, which targeted the main capitalist exploiters (in many cases the "*békés*," descendants of the former slaveholders) and the French state, including its local satraps. The primary aim of the strikes was to ease the growing poverty and racist oppression of the majority of the population of these colonies. They exposed before the eyes of the world the hypocrisy of the French bourgeoisie, which veils its imperialist greed behind speeches about "human rights." These strikes showed once again, especially to the multiethnic proletariat in France, that hard class battles must be waged to resist the capitalists' attacks and repression. This was the context for Sarkozy's referendum on autonomy, the purpose of which was to refurbish French imperialism while trying to sidetrack what remains of the militant struggle into colonial legal double-talk.

If a "yes" vote had won, it would have been followed by years of negotiations between the French state and its political agents in the Caribbean in order to work out a law which would make a few adjustments to the administrative regulations. Then this law would have been submitted to the French parliament. Among the possible new "powers" would be things like having anthems and flags, along with greater powers of local taxation, more control of public-sector hiring (in other words, Martiniquan jobs for Martiniquans) and a few additional measures regarding the economy and the environment. Decisions relating to state power (the courts, the police, defense, currency, etc.) would remain in Paris. Announcing the referendum, Sarkozy played the little Bonaparte, declaring: "As long as I am president of the Republic, the question of Martinique's independence will not be posed." And "Martinique is French and will remain so."

Participation in the voting was relatively high for a vote of this sort, but 45 percent of registered voters still gave it a miss. Many people expressed the fear, which is more acute than ever in this period of economic crisis and high unemployment, that if the referendum passed it could mean the loss of French colonial status and European Union membership, and thus the loss of remaining social gains, forcing the majority of the population into even greater poverty. The media also reported on some Martiniquan workers who rejected the referendum, saying that it had nothing to do with their daily struggle to survive—they knew very well that the nationalist and social-democratic politicians who advocated a yes vote just wanted a greater say in how to exploit the workers. As we wrote in *Le Bolchévik* [see "French Caribbean Colonies Shaken by General Strikes," *WV* No. 937, 22 May 2009]:

> "Some leading nationalists in both Guadeloupe and Martinique often express their desire for the transfer of much of the state administration to a locally run body which could slash social benefits. According to the nationalists, these benefits make their agriculture and tourism uncompetitive against other Caribbean islands. But right now the nationalists are not emphasizing the struggle for independence—their program is rather to grab for themselves the profits from colonial exploitation which for centuries have been pocketed by the *békés*."

Corbis photos

Martinique, 13 February 2009: Farm workers (above) block access to industrial area during general strike, while protester (left) holds sign reading "Black Code," referring to slavery.

The question posed by the January 10 referendum was whether one was for or against an empty shell—i.e., greater so-called "autonomy." The position of the LTF was for abstention. We were also against voting yes or no in the plebiscite that followed two weeks later, where it was a question of deciding for or against a fusion of the regional councils and general councils in Martinique and in French Guiana. None of these referendums offered anything positive to the working class.

Our starting point is defense of the right of self-determination for the French colonies. As intransigent opponents of French colonialism, which in the Caribbean was based on slavery, we would be in favor of independence. But we are against any forced independence, and we do not presently demand the immediate independence of Martinique, French Guiana or other colonies, notably because today the vast majority of the population proletariat from Guadeloupe and Martinique is mainly to be found in France; this émigré proletariat represents a living link for socialist revolution in France and the Caribbean.

Our position on the national question stands in the revolutionary tradition of Lenin's Bolsheviks. For the Bolsheviks, federation and autonomy fundamentally accept continued colonial capitalist domination. Lenin said: "A reformist change is one which leaves intact the foundations of the power of the ruling class and is merely a concession leaving its power unimpaired. A revolutionary change undermines the foundations of power. A reformist national programme does *not* abolish *all* the privileges of the ruling nation; it does *not* establish complete equality; it does *not* abolish national oppression *in all its forms*. An 'autonomous' nation does not enjoy rights equal to those of the 'ruling' nation" ("The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up"). Lenin wrote, also in 1916: "The right of nations to self-determination implies exclusively the right to independence in the political sense, the right to free political separation from the oppressor nation" ("The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination—Theses").

Combat Ouvrier Gives "Left" Proletarian Cover to Nationalists

The Marxist position has nothing to do with capitulation to nationalism or with the crass reformism of Combat Ouvrier (CO), Lutte Ouvrière's fraternal group in Martinique. CO admitted the obvious when it wrote in its 19 December editorial that "for this referendum campaign, what is striking is that they [the politicians of Martinique] did not commit themselves to anything at all; they did not even pretend to promise anything! This shows that tomorrow they really intend to administer the new status solely in the interests of those who own and run Martinique!" But barely a few lines further on, CO is implicitly supporting a yes vote in the January 10 referendum! On what basis? They claim that the workers and poor (who apparently, unlike CO, don't understand anything) were supposedly for greater autonomy under Article 74; so in solidarity with these toilers, CO went along with a yes vote. They argue further that this measure would allow "us" to put more effective pressure on the local bourgeois executive and to obtain decisions which are "in favor of the toiling and poor layers":

> "However, if some form of local power is created after the vote on Article 74 or 73 in the referendums of January 10 and 24, that would have the advantage for us of having close at hand all these politicians who are responsible for attacks against the workers and poor. The seat of that power will be closer and we will be able to go there when we want to hold them accountable.
>
> "Therefore we members of Combat Ouvrier understand that some workers may want to see this change in Statute 74 passed and lead to a form of local power....
>
> "Therefore we feel in solidarity with the workers who want to vote in favor of the birth of this form of local power....
>
> "From now on we have to realize that we will have to closely watch these politicians and other dignitaries in the exercise of that power and be ready to hold them accountable at any moment, so that as often as possible decisions are taken a little more in favor of the toiling and poor layers."

What touching faith in the colonial state apparatus, the exploiters' instrument for repressing the exploited! And this comes right after the brutal repression of the general strikes, as they are gearing up determinedly to take back the main gains of those struggles. CO's position coincides with that of its Martiniquan partners in the February 5 Collective (K5F, the February 2009 general strike committee), which includes the CGTM union in which the influence of CO is well known. The president of K5F, Philippe Pierre-Charles, is the leader and founding member of the Socialist Revolution Group (GRS), which is associated with the New Anti-Capitalist Party (NPA). The GRS openly called for voting for Article 74, but "without illusions"—in other words, voting for this colonial fraud while knowing perfectly well that it goes against the interests of the workers and poor. The support that Combat Ouvrier & Co. gave to the referendum charade

Lutte Ouvrière's Municipal Antics

The following article is translated from Le Bolchévik *No. 192 (June 2010).*

In 2007, [the reformist group] Lutte Ouvrière (LO) mobilized its members for the following year's municipal elections, insisting on the importance of getting some municipal representatives. At the end of 2007, by a majority of 97 percent, LO's party congress adopted a resolution stating:

> "Getting some municipal councillors elected is extremely important for our political influence. These elected officials are a means of rooting ourselves in a city and the axis that our local activities can orbit around....
>
> "The conclusion is that we should try to field slates in the maximum number of localities. However, that will not stop us from examining and being open to all proposals for alliances, which we will consider depending on the situation, the local relationship of forces and the possibilities for getting elected that these alliances could really open up to us. Indeed, we have no interest in making alliances on a program of agreements with possible allies if that does not get us some people elected, or even prevents us from getting people elected, and all the more so since we have the means to run independently."
>
> —*Lutte de Classe* No. 109, December 2007

In other words, LO was ready for any dirty deal to obtain positions on municipal councils and told its members that it was going to try to negotiate for positions on "left" slates. LO went to beg the Socialist Party [SP], which in most cases said flatly no. But the PCF [French Communist Party] often accepted them on its slates, after making sure that LO would be loyal to the future municipal majority. LO eventually ran on the slates of the bourgeois mayor of Belfort, a fiefdom of [bourgeois politician Jean-Pierre] Chevènement, who served as minister of police under [former SP prime minister Lionel] Jospin.

So far, LO has more than proven that it is a reliable partner for a municipal popular front. We don't know of any instances when LO voted against a budget. LO national spokesman Nathalie Arthaud, a member of the CP-led municipal majority running Vaulx-en-Velin (in the Lyon suburbs), justified voting for the budget "in the name of LO" during the municipal council meeting on 25 March 2009:

> "Of course we are going to vote for the budget presented by the municipal majority, because we are in solidarity with the proposed orientations and choices, whether they are expressed in educational policy, support to associations, rates applied to services rendered or general orientation. The municipal majority is concerned about responding to the needs of the population and especially the underprivileged population, and for us that is essential. Beyond some disagreements on details, we share this majority's basic choices."
>
> —Minutes of the Vaulx-en-Velin Municipal Council, 25 March 2009

In spite of LO's concerns that having municipal councillors was "extremely important for our political influence," the political influence of these municipal councillors did not reach the pages of the weekly *Lutte Ouvrière*, which has barely breathed a word about their performance: to our knowledge, LO wrote about them briefly three times in the space of two years. That's why a 19 February article mentioning them takes on a very particular importance for judging their municipal politics.

The article is about Bagnolet—a municipality in the Paris suburbs—which has been controlled by the CP for decades. Bagnolet is also where an LO regional leader, Jean-Pierre Mercier (also a union bureaucrat in the PSA automobile factory at Aulnay), was elected on the slates of CP mayor Marc Everbecq in 2008. The article recounts the forcible eviction, on the mayor's orders and in the middle of winter, of the tenants of an apartment building occupied in part by African workers. This time LO condemned the racist eviction, contrary to what they did in 2005 in a similar case in the town of Aubervilliers, which was run at the time by the CP (see our article in *Le Bolchévik* No. 173 [September 2005]). LO solidarizes with the victims of the Bagnolet eviction and denounces the propaganda of the town administration, which, indeed, does not hesitate to use every racist cliché in order to justify its action, calling the victims smugglers, drug dealers and pimps.

A naive reader, taking LO's recent hypocritical rhetoric about "communism" at face value, might expect LO to denounce all its past capitulations to the PCF mayor and break its pact with the devil of bourgeois municipalism. Absolutely not! On the contrary, LO's article states:

> "A support committee was set up for the evicted people, with the Right to Housing Committee and other organizations. LO's municipal councillors in the town participated in its creation. And the evictees were quite happy to find members of the municipal majority at their side, able to condemn the dirty tricks, even when they came from City Hall."

In other words, LO went to the victims of the municipal government, openly declaring itself part of the very municipal council majority that was evicting them! Under these conditions, LO's support amounted to reassuring the evictees that they really should not infer from this that the administration of capitalism is necessarily racist (whether in the hands of the PCF and LO or not). It is precisely for this kind of thing that LO is useful to the PCF mayors. The message that LO thus helps to get across is that of course you cannot run a town administration without breaking a few eggs, but in the last analysis there is always somebody in the municipal majority who will come and warm your heart (if nothing else) when you are out on the street and it's snowing.

LO itself accurately described its conception of municipal work as reformist: "By definition, neither municipal work nor trade-union activity can be revolutionary; they are reformist" (*Lutte de Classe* No. 110, February 2008). LO deliberately confuses two things. One is the question of administering capitalism at the municipal level by taking part in a municipal council majority—and thus taking responsibility for what running capitalism entails, i.e., inevitably, racist discrimination in public housing; "personnel management," including the mayor's office laying off city workers; reducing the number of elementary school classes; cutting back childcare; raising local taxes; setting up "neighborhood police" and police stations; etc. The other is winning an election as a revolutionary proletarian ***opposition*** in order to denounce administering capitalism.

For Marxists, however, this is a fundamental difference—a difference of principle. More than 150 years ago, Karl Marx insisted that you cannot take hold of the capitalist state—which is an apparatus of oppression made up of armed bodies whose role is to maintain the dictatorship of capital—in order to make it serve the interest of the working class. This is true for the central government, and it is equally true at the lowest level of the state, the municipal level. Thus, the mayor has police powers within his territory; mayors, including PCF mayors, are the direct representatives of the capitalist state at the municipal level.

That is why Lenin always opposed municipalism, notably during the elections to the local (municipal) dumas in April 1917 in Russia. We recommend to our readers the article in the current issue of our international journal *Spartacist* [English-language edition No. 61, Spring 2009]. The article documents Lenin's intransigent struggle, even though the Third International itself had come to questionable conclusions on the question of municipalism at its [1920] Second Congress. Denouncing the bourgeoisie's institutions of local government, the resolution on parliamentarism stipulated that "to counterpose them to the organs of the state is theoretically incorrect. They are in reality organizations similar to the mechanism of the bourgeois state." However, the resolution wrongly allowed Communist parties to hold municipal executive office.

The bourgeois state must be destroyed by a workers revolution based on new organs of power—workers councils—unconditionally opposed to the bourgeois order at all levels, national, regional and municipal. So it should be evident that the working class cannot reach this understanding if its revolutionary element itself participates in the institutions of bourgeois power, even municipal ones. From this principled opposition to executive offices of the bourgeois state flows the fact that Marxists cannot run for such posts without risking conferring legitimacy upon them in the eyes of the workers. Therefore we refuse on principle to run for executive office, be it the election of the mayor and his deputies by the municipal council or the election of the president of the republic by universal suffrage. We also refuse to seek to be a part of a parliamentary or municipal majority that takes on executive responsibility.

In contrast, for nearly 40 years LO has never failed to run a candidate for president. In 2008, they took a further step by "getting their hands dirty" at the municipal level. In fact, it is the logic of reformism to set about administering capitalism starting at the municipal level. Our perspective, on the other hand, is international socialist revolution. That perspective begins by opposing LO's bourgeois municipalism and must end with the dictatorship of the proletariat, which will eliminate the organs of bourgeois repression at all levels, including the municipal. ***Down with executive offices of the capitalist state!*** ■

DAL photos

Right: French cops evict African immigrants who sought refuge in gymnasium after being kicked out of their apartments in Paris suburb of Bagnolet, February. Far right: Protest against the evictions.

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served to give credence to Sarkozy's "reforms" and his attempts to refurbish the image of French colonial domination.

Given the crushing defeat of the "yes" camp in the January 10 referendum, CO tried to distance itself from its initial position of "solidarity" with the imaginary workers who "may want to see this change in Statute 74 passed." They claimed in a press release published in *Lutte Ouvrière* (but not in *Combat Ouvrier*) that "We of Combat Ouvrier gave no advice on how to vote, because we didn't want to sanction the past, present and future actions of politicians who do not care about the interests and aspirations of the workers. This consultation was a phony choice!"

This capitulation to petty-bourgeois nationalism is nothing new for CO. In Guadeloupe they are part of the LKP [January-February 2009 general strike committee] in the name of "*tous ensemble*" (united struggle). This organization is a combative popular-frontist coalition, which includes the workers movement but also a whole series of petty-bourgeois nationalist and cultural organizations. At bottom, the LKP represents the program of bourgeois nationalism. Its popular-front nature is determined not only by the organizations that constitute it but also by its program. For example, many of the 149 demands the LKP put forward during last year's strikes were supportable, including the demand for a raise of 200 euros per month for all low-paid and minimum-wage workers, as well as demands for a large-scale program of public housing construction and a real public transportation system. However, many other demands—such as giving preferential treatment to local capitalists over other capitalists ("priority and ease of access to the market and to public assistance for Guadeloupean businesses")—underline the bourgeois-nationalist nature of the bloc, which addresses itself to "the people of Guadeloupe, workers, peasants, artisans, retirees, unemployed, *businessmen*, youth" (our emphasis).

In France the task of the revolutionary party is to mobilize the workers on the side of oppressed nations and for their right to self-determination. In Guadeloupe and Martinique, the crucial task is to break the hold of nationalist false consciousness. The fact that CO participates as the "far left" component in the LKP and the February 5 Collective goes precisely in the opposite direction: CO gives petty-bourgeois nationalism a left cover. In France LO uncritically applauds CO's work in the LKP and KSF, and so on. But LO's class collaboration in France is no less criminal—for example, calling on the working class to vote for the Socialist Party's Ségolène Royal in the 2007 elections ("without illusions," of course) and participating in municipal councils to administer capitalist austerity at the local level alongside the Communist Party as well as ecologists, "alternative" candidates, supporters of Chevènement [a bourgeois politician] and others. Thus they are an obstacle to the class independence and revolutionary consciousness that are indispensable to the fight for socialist revolution and to putting an end to the colonial yoke and the heritage of slavery in the Caribbean. ■

Partisan Defense Committee

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Puerto Rico: Hands Off Campus Strikers!

For more than five weeks, students at the University of Puerto Rico have been on strike to protest budget cuts, tuition hikes and moves by the government to privatize university services. The strike began on April 21 at the main Río Piedras campus in the capital city, San Juan, and spread across the island, paralyzing the eleven-campus public university with its enrollment of 65,000. In an effort to break the strike, riot cops surrounded the main gates of Río Piedras on May 14 to deny food and water to students occupying the campus. But hundreds of the students' supporters broke the blockade, tossing bags of food and bottles of water over the heads of the police.

The strike has received wide support among workers, teachers, and community organizations in Puerto Rico and among student groups, intellectuals and others internationally. On May 18, a coalition of Puerto Rican public employees unions carried out a one-day strike in support of the students' demands. As the *Miami Herald* (23 May) observed, "Not since Puerto Rico rallied to chase the United States Navy out of Vieques a decade ago have so many different social sectors rallied around a single cause." The strike is taking place against a backdrop of widespread anger and discontent throughout the island over government austerity measures, mass layoffs of public employees and rising unemployment. Last October, a one-day general strike and mass rallies protesting austerity measures paralyzed San Juan.

Puerto Rico remains a colony of U.S. imperialism, and it is ultimately Washington that holds the whip hand over the Puerto Rican masses. It is crucial for the U.S. working class to stand in solidarity with the striking students and the embattled unions. ***Victory to the student strike! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico!***

We print below a May 29 letter by the Partisan Defense Committee—a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League—addressed to Puerto Rico governor Luis Fortuño protesting a recent brutal police attack against student strikers and their supporters.

* * *

The Partisan Defense Committee vigorously protests the police assault on students, trade unionists and independence advocates who protested at the Sheraton Hotel in San Juan on May 20 in support of the University of Puerto Rico campus strike. Shock Forces (Fuerzas de Choque) agents brutally attacked protesters with tasers, clubs, tear gas and pepper spray. Dozens were injured, including Central Labor Federation president Luisa Acevedo, Puerto Rican Labor Federation president José Rodríguez Báez and Hostosian National Independence Movement co-president Julio Muriente. Police arrested Public Buildings Union member Miguel Angel Ramos Linn and students Gabriel Muriente Pastrana, Angel Santiago Díaz and José Pérez, who was hospitalized after police tased him several times.

The PDC demands that no legal charges or reprisals be brought against the strikers and their supporters. The University of Puerto Rico strike was provoked by your government's draconian budget cuts and efforts to privatize university services, as well as threats to limit tuition waivers for students and to increase summer tuition. Earlier this month, police blocked deliveries of food and water in an unsuccessful attempt to starve out strikers at the Río Piedras campus, and the father of one striker was arrested for trying to deliver food. The PDC joins the Puerto Rican trade unions, students and professors in the U.S., Mexico, Canada, Spain and Venezuela, and prominent individuals like Cuban singer Silvio Rodríguez and Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano, as well as the Cuban government, who have solidarized with the strike.

Hands off student protesters and trade unionists! ■

Indymedia

Students occupy Río Piedras campus in April in first week of island-wide University of Puerto Rico strike.

Letter on Prison Hell

We print below an April 8 letter to the Partisan Defense Committee from Tom Manning. Manning and Jaan Laaman are the last two members of the Ohio 7 still in prison and are recipients of the PDC class-war prisoner stipend program. The Ohio 7 were members of the United Freedom Front, a radical group that took credit for bombings that targeted symbols of U.S. imperialism, including military and corporate offices, in the late 1970s and '80s (see "Ohio 7: Fighters Against Imperialism, Racism," *WV* No. 741, 8 September 2000). The PDC has long defended the Ohio 7, including during a 1989 trial on trumped-up "seditious conspiracy" charges. From the standpoint of the working class, their actions against U.S. imperialism and racist injustice were not crimes, and these courageous activists should not have served a day in prison.

In 1987 Manning was convicted in a second frame-up trial for the 1981 shooting of a New Jersey state trooper, and the government is determined that he die in prison, as did fellow Ohio 7 defendant Richard Williams in 2005. Manning has spent years in lockdown in some of the worst hellholes of the prison system, including USP Marion (Illinois) and USP Florence ADMAX (Colorado), a sensory deprivation unit of steel and concrete, with no sound and minimal human contact, designed to break prisoners. ***Free Jaan Laaman and Tom Manning! Free all class-war prisoners!***

* * *

Dear PD folks,

This evening your mailing found me again—at yet another prison. I'm now at the USP#I Coleman, Florida. Having been moved on March 15th and 16th from West Virginia to Maryland, to Harrisburg, PA., to Oklahoma City, OK., to West Virginia again, and finally to Tampa, Florida, a two hour bus trip out here to the Coleman Correctional Complex. Site of at least five federal prisons. I'm into my fourth week of sitting in the hole—waiting for S.I.S. (internal security) to decide whether they want me at their great place here.

4strugglemag

Tom Manning

With my arthritis and artificial joints (3) I don't travel as well as I once did, especially with all the air conditioning at full blast on all those planes and buses, and here in the hole (SHU), where there is no sunlight (windows blocked by steel) and plenty of damp cold air. All this coming after two months being denied any pain meds. By the time they pulled me off the bus here, I felt like they pulled me out from under it. After nine days here, I finally got some pain meds. So I'm doing alright in that, even though I was without them for the last two days due to organizational disorganization. The Struggle Continues!

When the bus I was on arrived at Harrisburg Airport, and fell into line with dozens of other prisoner transport buses and vans, out in the cold wind in a remote corner of the tarmac, where the area was transformed into an impromptu, yet much practiced, transfer junction, with lines of chained and shackled prisoners, by the hundreds, being assembled in the cold with flimsy paper jump suits of different colors, (like paper Dr. Dentons) depending on which prison each group came from. Brown, blue, orange, yellow, white, tan—to be reloaded onto other buses or vans, or to await the arrival of the BOP airliners. All surrounded by armed guards meeting and greeting each other, sipping hot coffee or whatever from their thermoses, dressed in their insulated bulky outdoor gear. Boots, jackets, hoods, etc. while we stood there by the hundred, by the hours, shivering so bad one couldn't control it. Couldn't will it away or ignore it.

This is just one transfer junction of this remote corner of Pennsylvania. And I was thinking—if any other so-called First World European country were to move this many prisoners as I was seeing there, at this time and place, it would make world news. Yet this is just one locale. How many more locales was this happening in/at this time or on any given day?

A star trek type sample of slave caravans crisscrossing the edges of the Sahara, or gathering on West African shores. At least they weren't tossing the dead and dying overboard as they did in the middle passage.

From five a.m. Monday till eleven p.m. Tuesday I had a total of three hours without blackboxed handcuffs, bellychain and leg shackles and got two and a half hours sleep. All the time thinking, "it could be worse..."

Anyway, thank you for telling us of Mumia's struggles and Lynne's. And thank you for the money order, as usual. It's much appreciated. All things considered.

The Struggle Still Continues!
Tom Manning
No Justice, No Peace!

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NOTICE

Workers Vanguard **skips alternate issues in June, July and August. Our next issue will be dated July 2.**

Thrown Back in Prison

Free Vanunu! Let Him Leave Israel!

On May 23, Mordechai Vanunu, the whistle-blower who spent 18 years in prison for exposing the extent of Israel's nuclear arsenal, began serving a three-month prison sentence that stems from his December 29 arrest for meeting with a Norwegian woman in Jerusalem. Despite serving his entire prior sentence, Vanunu remains barred from talking to non-Israelis and going near airports, ports and embassies, subject to 24-hour surveillance and prevented from leaving the country.

Following his December arrest, Vanunu was sentenced to six months of "community service" in overwhelmingly Jewish West Jerusalem. Fearing his life would be threatened by right-wing Israelis who consider him a "traitor," Vanunu requested that his sentence be served in predominantly Palestinian East Jerusalem. When the court rejected his request, Vanunu declined to carry out his community service. On May 11, he was sentenced to prison once again.

The vindictive, blood-soaked rulers of the Zionist state will not rest until Vanunu, a former technician at the Israeli nuclear weapons facility in Dimona, is forever silenced for having revealed that Israel had upwards of 200 nuclear warheads. This arsenal, built up with the active support of the French and then the U.S. imperialist powers, was enough not only to incinerate every Arab capital but to bomb major cities in the Soviet Union as well.

Reuters

Jerusalem: Defiant Mordechai Vanunu, escorted by Israeli prison guards as he leaves court, 29 December 2009.

Vanunu was born to a Sephardic Jewish family that emigrated from Morocco to Israel, where he experienced discrimination at the hands of the European-derived Ashkenazi establishment. As a student at Beersheba's Ben-Gurion University, he joined protests against Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon and actively fought for the rights of Palestinian and Bedouin students. Fed up with the Israeli garrison state, Vanunu left the country in 1986 and later converted to Christianity while in Australia.

In 1986, he was kidnapped in Italy by the Israeli Mossad secret police, thrown into a desert prison in Ashkelon and sentenced by a secret military court. In prison, Vanunu was given the kind of treatment Israel's rulers reserve for those they deem "subhuman"—the Palestinians imprisoned within the electric fences that surround Gaza, those confined behind the concrete walls and checkpoints of the West Bank, the thousands who languish in Israel's prison torture chambers. He spent more than eleven years in solitary confinement, entombed in a six-by-nine cell in a high-security complex built for Palestinians.

When Vanunu walked out of prison in April 2004, he said that he was "proud and happy to do what I did." He was arrested later that year and, in 2007, he was sentenced to another six months' imprisonment. He remains defiant, declaring before he was dragged away to his cell last month, "You didn't get anything from me in 18 years; you won't get anything in 3 months. Shame on you, Israel." Defenders of the Palestinian people and opponents of capitalist repression everywhere must take up the call to free this courageous opponent of Zionist terror and demand that he be allowed to leave Israel.

Massacre...

(continued from page 1)

a given. But in recent years, Israel's rulers have also made a point of targeting Western supporters of the Palestinians. In 2003, two activists of the pro-Palestinian International Solidarity Movement (ISM) were killed at the hands of Israeli forces: 23-year-old American Rachel Corrie was crushed by a bulldozer as she tried to stop the demolition of a Palestinian home, and 21-year-old British photojournalist Tom Hurndall was shot in the head by Israeli troops as he tried to protect children in Gaza's Rafah refugee camp. Yesterday in the West Bank, Emily Henochowicz, a 21-year-old American, had her left eye blown out by troops as she protested against the *Mavi Marmara* massacre.

Not surprisingly, the Israeli massacre has provoked condemnation from numerous governments, not least the Erdogan regime in Turkey, an unofficial sponsor of the flotilla. These same capitalist regimes have shown themselves equally as capable as the Israeli bourgeois rulers in perpetrating atrocities against ethnic, religious and national minorities. As for the imperialists, Britain and France laid the basis for the continuing misery of the Palestinians and other peoples of the Near East in the period between the two world wars, when they brutally suppressed anti-colonial uprisings and set one people against another.

For its part, the Democratic administration of President Barack Obama refuses even to slap Israel on the wrist. Washington has been the chief arms supplier to the Zionist state for decades, shelling out several billions of dollars a year. On the eve of the Israeli blitzkrieg in Gaza, then-presidential candidate Obama made clear in a visit to Israel that his administration would continue to give the Zionist state a blank check for its anti-Palestinian terror.

A prominent chant at the May 31 New York protest was: "Obama, it's past time—stop Israeli war crimes!" But the Obama administration is not about to stop Israeli war crimes or, more to the point, its own. Under both Democratic and Republican administrations, it is U.S. imperialism that is the main enemy of the world's workers and oppressed masses. Today it continues to perpetrate massacres against the peoples of Afghanistan and Pakistan on a regular basis. And only months after Washington seized on the earthquake in Haiti to send in 20,000 troops to re-occupy that tiny and impoverished black country, the government of Jamaica carried out a police massacre of dozens of slum dwellers in Kingston at the behest of the U.S. rulers. Down with U.S. aid to Israel! U.S. imperialists—hands off the world!

Israel's attack on the civilian aid flotilla serves to underscore the futility of attempts by various reformist leftists to lobby the "democratic" imperialist powers to pressure Israel to tamp down its murderous repression. Suppression of the Palestinian people has been intrinsic to the Zionist cause from its inception in Europe in the latter half of the 19th century, as it set itself the ersatz messianic mission of conquering "a land without people for a people without a land."

Notwithstanding the intentions of some of the earliest socialist-minded Jewish immigrants in Palestine, what the Zionist project has always meant in practice was the driving out of one people from the land and its replacement by another. Decades of land-grabbing were followed by the mass expulsion of Palestinians in 1947-48 and the ghettoization of those Arabs who remained in the new state of Israel. The conquest of the Occupied Territories in 1967 fueled dreams of a "Greater Israel" and the further displacement of Palestinians in Gaza, East Jerusalem and the West Bank, which is now surrounded by a wall and riddled with military checkpoints. The right-wing government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu includes such figures as Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, who openly advocates "transfer"—the genocidal expulsion of all Palestinian Arabs.

American anti-Zionist academic Norman Finkelstein captured something when he described Israel, in a May 31 interview with Russia Today TV, as "a lunatic state with between two and three hundred nuclear devices that is threatening war daily against Iran and against the Hezbollah in Lebanon." It is notable that the massacre on the Turkish ship came only two weeks after the U.S. and Israel denounced a deal brokered by Turkey and Brazil to provide Iran with fuel for its nuclear reactors. While Washington seeks to beef up the imperialist economic

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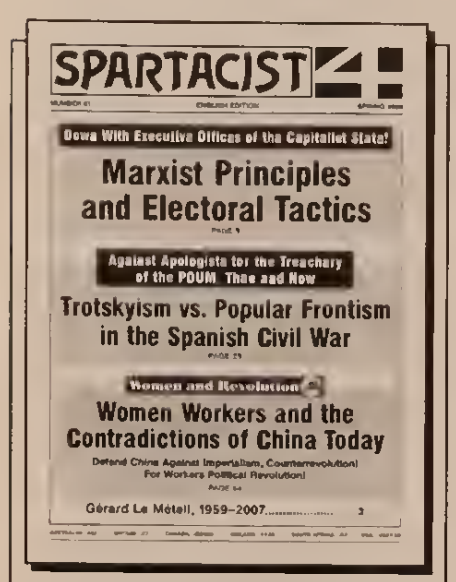
EPA

WV Photo

May 31 protests against murderous attack on Gaza aid ship: Istanbul (top), New York City.



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North Korea...

(continued from page 1)

crush North Korea ever since capitalist/landlord rule was overthrown there following World War II. At that time, gigantic social upheavals swept the Korean peninsula, facilitated in the North by the presence of the Soviet Army. This resulted in freeing that part of the country from imperialist domination and establishing proletarian, collectivized property relations.

Under the aegis of the UN, the U.S. and its imperialist allies devastated the peninsula in the Korean War of 1950-53, killing some three million people in an effort to crush not only the social revolution in Korea but also the Chinese Revolution of 1949. Following a massive Chinese military intervention on the side of the North, the war ended in a stalemate at the 38th parallel. Ever since, U.S. imperialism has maintained a strong military presence in the South, helping to prop up a series of murderous military regimes for more than three decades. More recently, due to its economic development, South Korea has been able to modernize its own military, enabling the U.S. to reduce its forces. Nevertheless, some 26,000 U.S. troops remain stationed in South Korea as a dagger pointed at both the militant South Korean working class and the North Korean bureaucratically deformed workers state, whose very existence is a reminder to Washington of its failure to "roll back Communism" in East Asia. All U.S. troops out of Korea now!

Whatever actually happened on the night of March 26, it is clear that the "official" story stinks. After first downplaying North Korean involvement, and then claiming that the ship may have been sunk by a mine dating from the Korean War, U.S. and South Korean officials took nearly two months to issue their report (yet to be made public) claiming that a North Korean torpedo was responsible. When a member of the investigation team asserted that it appeared that the *Cheonan*'s sinking was an accident and that evidence allegedly implicating the North had been tampered with, prosecutors called him in for questioning and the Defense Ministry demanded that the National Assembly eject him from the investigation for "arousing public mistrust" (*Bloomberg Businessweek*, 29 May).

Meanwhile, as reported by the North Korean Central News Agency (28 May), a military spokesman for the Pyongyang regime denounced the incident as "a fabrication and charade orchestrated by the south Korean puppet authorities." Indeed, South Korea's "investigation" has about as much credibility as Washington's declarations following the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident, which was fabricated in order to escalate the dirty U.S. war against the Vietnamese workers and peasants. And who can forget the bogus U.S. claims that Saddam Hussein's Iraq had "weapons of mass destruction," which served as the pretext for the U.S.-led 2003 invasion.

But even if the North Korean navy did sink the *Cheonan*, it would have been an act of defense against repeated provocations by the U.S. and South Korea.

The location where the ship went down, slightly to the west of Baengnyeong Island, is in an area that for years has been a staging ground for South Korean provocations against the North. Less than ten miles from North Korea's west coast, Baengnyeong Island is closer to North Korea's capital, Pyongyang, than any other portion of South Korean territory. The waters off the island were separated off from North Korea by the "Northern Limit Line," a totally artificial "border" that was unilaterally drawn by the U.S. occupiers following the Korean War and never recognized by the North. That imperialist maneuver served its purpose. In 1999, a North Korean ship went down, with 20 sailors lost, after being hit by South Korean fire. In 2002, North Korea suffered at least 30 casualties from a firefight with Southern warships. And last November a North Korean patrol boat was heavily damaged, with at least one sailor killed, after South Korean vessels fired thousands of rounds of ammunition. Notably, the incident involving the *Cheonan* was preceded by military exercises involving some 26,000 U.S. and South Korean troops just south of these same waters.

Imperialist Japan, which carried out a particularly vicious 40-year colonial occupation of Korea that ended with Japan's defeat in World War II, has fully backed the provocations against North Korea. Japanese media are replete with calls for joint military exercises between the U.S. and South Korea, as this would force the North to be in "constant preparation for war" and further devastate the economy. The Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the social-patriotic Japanese Communist Party (JCP) joined in the reactionary chorus, with the JCP denouncing North Korea's "unlawful and violent military action" (*Akahata*, 22 May).

Japanese prime minister Yukio Hatoyama, who had run for office promising that the U.S. military base in Okinawa would be removed, last week pointed to "the situation on the Korean peninsula" and the need for a "deterrent force" as reasons for agreeing to keep the U.S. base. That decision sparked a renewed uproar in Japan, where thousands have repeatedly protested against the U.S. presence in Okinawa, and impelled the SDP to leave the coalition government. As revolutionary opponents of U.S. imperialism, we demand the removal of all U.S. bases and troops from Japan, which constitute a particular threat to the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states. The Spartacist League/U.S. joins with our comrades of the Spartacist Group Japan in proclaiming: Smash the counterrevolutionary alliance of U.S. and Japanese imperialism through workers revolution on both sides of the Pacific! Not a penny or a man for the bourgeois military!

The greatest menace to the workers and oppressed of the world is U.S. imperialism, whose rulers have not only acquired the means to destroy the world several times over but have carried out nuclear holocaust, incinerating some 200,000 Japanese people in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Obama's recently released "Nuclear Posture Review" continues to target North Korea for a nuclear strike by labeling it a violator of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. In the face of such threats, it is not only rational but necessary for North Korea to continue its development of nuclear weapons and adequate delivery systems to deter imperialist attack.

Financial Times graphic

Map indicates that South Korean ship sank right off coast of North Korea and points to U.S. military bases in neighboring Japan.

The defense of the North Korean and other deformed workers states is undermined by the rule of their nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies, whose policies are encapsulated in the dogma of "building socialism in one country." Opposing the fight for international proletarian revolution, the privileged bureaucracies instead pursue a futile quest for "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. So far, despite intense pressure from the U.S., Chinese premier Wen Jiabao has refused to condemn North Korea for the sinking of the *Cheonan*. But in 2006 and again in 2009, the Chinese Stalinist regime criminally voted for sanctions against North Korea in the UN Security Council following missile tests by Pyongyang. The 2009 sanctions encouraged UN member states to inspect North Korean cargo vessels and airplanes "suspected" of transporting military materiel.

Likewise, Beijing has treacherously sought to pressure Pyongyang into resuming the "six-party talks"—involving the U.S., China, Japan, Russia and the two Koreas—aimed at disarming North Korea. Beijing's craven appeasement of imperialism not only imperils North Korea but dangerously undermines the defense of China itself—the main target of the imperialists' drive for capitalist counterrevolution.

The extreme nationalism of Kim Jong Il's nepotistic regime similarly undercuts North Korea's defense. The Pyongyang Stalinists have long called for "peaceful reunification" with the South—a recipe for reunification of Korea on a capitalist basis. Many South Koreans feel a sense of solidarity with the North based on strong nationalist sentiments fed by a century of Japanese and American imperialist overlordship. Indeed, it is reported that a quarter of the population does not believe Seoul's line on the *Cheonan*. But Korea is divided along *class* lines. Korean nationalism, promoted by both the North Korean bureaucracy and the South Korean left, serves to tie the powerful and combative South Korean proletariat to its own ruling class. We fight for the ***revolutionary*** reunification of Korea, through socialist revolution in the South and workers political revolution in the North.

The defense of China and North Korea, as well as the Vietnamese and Cuban deformed workers states, is inseparable from the fight for socialist revolutions in the advanced capitalist societies, importantly for Asia in the industrial powerhouse of Japan, and in the belly of the U.S. imperialist beast. The International Communist League dedicates itself to forging the proletarian vanguard parties needed to carry out this task.■

Massacre...

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embargo against Iran, Israel continues to talk openly of bombing the country. Such threats underline that Iran needs nuclear weapons to defend itself against the imperialists and their junior partners.

Israel/Palestine is a prime example of the genocidal logic of bourgeois nationalism, particularly as played out in the context of its interpenetrated peoples. The national emancipation of the Palestinian people—including the right of all refugees and their descendants to return to their homeland—necessarily entails workers revolutions to shatter the Zionist state from within and to sweep away the neighboring capitalist ruling classes of Syria, Jordan and Lebanon, which themselves lord it over sizable Palestinian populations. Only within the framework of a socialist federation of the Near East will the national rights of both the Palestinian Arab and the Hebrew-speaking peoples, as well as of the Kurds and myriad others, be ensured.

Notwithstanding the growing entrenchment of ultra-chauvinist and religious reaction among sections of the Hebrew-speaking population and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism within the Palestinian and other Arab populations, the countries of the Near East are class-divided societies. Notably, Egypt has witnessed a rising tide of workers protests and strikes in recent years. In the face of massive sympathy among Egyptians for the Palestinians, the regime of Hosni Mubarak, which has ruled under a state of emergency for decades, actively collaborates with the Zionist rulers in enforcing the blockade of Gaza.

The solidarity among the peoples of the Near East with the oppressed Palestinian people must be directed toward proletarian revolution against their own rulers, who, whether bourgeois nationalists or Islamic traditionalists, are fundamentally instruments of Western imperialism. Revolutionary struggle in Iran and the Arab countries would serve in turn to aid in breaking the Hebrew-speaking working class, which includes a large number of downtrodden and impoverished Sephardic Jews, from the intoxication of Zionist chauvinism. Meanwhile, fully one-fifth of the population of Israel consists of Palestinian Arabs who have been subjected to blatant discrimination since the birth of the Zionist state in 1948.

The class interests of the workers of Israel lie in smashing the Zionist capitalist state and sweeping away their exploiters. But for this to happen, the *class* principle must prevail. What is necessary is the forging of multinational, multiethnic Marxist workers parties throughout the Near East, built in opposition to all forms of nationalism and religious fundamentalism. Such parties are the indispensable instruments to lead a successful fight for socialist revolution, which, on an international scale, can finally open the door to human equality and liberation.■

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Imperialist EU...

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by Schröder. But this is just a debate over which course is better for German imperialism.

At any rate, Merkel and Schäuble, unwilling for Germany to act as Europe's "paymaster" any longer, are united in the aim of having Germany emerge a winner from the economic crisis. Many commentators fear that their course is acutely endangering the EU and the euro. The arrogance of Merkel & Co. bespeaks German imperialism's newfound self-confidence, causing the rest of Europe to fear ominous developments to come. As "Madam No!" Merkel seemingly had her way at the EU summit and was hailed at home as the new "Iron Lady"—a reference to former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher, who made her name through her all-out war against the trade unions in the 1980s and subsequent destruction of Britain's manufacturing sector.

But this acclaim and the deal whereby Greece would have been forced to pay market interest rates—which would have driven Greek indebtedness sky-high forever—did not persist for long. French president [Nicolas] Sarkozy got together with Italian prime minister [Silvio] Berlusconi and European Central Bank head [Jean-Claude] Trichet and worked out a different deal, guaranteeing initial loans to Greece at an interest rate of 5 percent. And Schäuble agreed to this in a conference of the finance ministers. *Financial Times* (13 April) columnist Wolfgang

Spartakist

Berlin: German Trotskyists raise sign reading: "Down With Police Terror in Greece! For Workers Protests!" at 2008 protest.

Münchau noted: "As long as the credits are paid back, with this contract more funds will be flowing from Athens to Berlin than vice versa."

And it's toward Berlin that the transfer of wealth has been steadily proceeding. When French finance minister [Christine] Lagarde criticized overly low wages in Germany, which she blamed for imbalances in the EU, she was greeted with a wave of outrage from Germany's ruling class and its literary hacks. However, in the 10 March *Frankfurter Rundschau*, Heiner Flassbeck and Friederike Spiecker advanced arguments similar to Lagarde's: "Greece and all of southern Europe need a leveling-out [of wage levels], because they, rightly, did not participate in German wage-slashing over the last ten years. This leveling-out must occur in the medium term; otherwise the euro can't be preserved, no matter how long, how hard or by which institution the thumbscrews are applied to the Greeks." They go on to complain, "With the assistance of the [European] Central Bank, German policy doggedly refuses to reflect on the actual source of balance-of-payments disparities—Germany's policy of slashing wages."

While these "imbalances" do genuinely exist, appealing to the German government and the capitalists to pay higher wages, as the SPD and Die Linke [Left Party] similarly do, is utterly delusional—it's like convincing sharks to become vegetarians. With this crisis the German bourgeoisie feels the wind in its sails and intends to extract even more profits out of the workers of Germany and Europe. The only way to oppose this is hard class struggle.

EU: From Anti-Soviet Alliance to Imperialist Consortium

As proletarian internationalists, we communists are opposed on principle to the EU, which is dominated by the imperialist powers Germany, France and Britain. The EU exists centrally to advance the interests of these imperialists and their junior partners and to employ the stronger dependent states such as Greece and many East European countries as their manufacturing backyard. Since the mid 1990s, the EU has served increasingly as a means for totally excluding refugees and immigrants, who are either left to drown in the Mediterranean or held in detention camps reminiscent of concentration camps, to be shipped back as rapidly as possible to the hellish conditions in countries exploited or directly destroyed by imperialism.

But the EU is itself a fragile formation exposed to continuous tensions stemming from the disparate national interests of the European imperialists, which threaten to split it apart. Nor can it be otherwise. Although the productive forces have long since expanded beyond a national framework, capitalism is a system resting essentially on nation-states: each of the various national capitalist classes needs its own state to push through and defend its interests at home and abroad. This contradiction is, indeed, one of the causes of the last two world wars. And hence the supposed goal of political union or a European super-state is necessarily an empty utopia. Even the free-trade alliance of the EU is threatened in the present crisis due to the imbalances inevitably created by rapacious capitalism. As the Russian revolutionary V. I. Lenin, a leader of the first successful workers revolution, wrote in August 1915:

> "Of course, *temporary* agreements are possible between capitalists and between states. In this sense a United States of Europe is possible as an agreement between the *European* capitalists...but to what end? Only for the purpose of jointly suppressing socialism in Europe, of jointly protecting colonial booty *against* Japan and America."
>
> —"On the Slogan for a United States of Europe"

The origins of the European Union go back to the 1950s, when the West European imperialists under U.S. leadership attempted to stabilize their alliance against the Soviet Union through closer economic cooperation. Issuing out of the October Revolution of 1917, the Soviet Union remained a workers state—based on the expropriation of the capitalists and the collectivization of the means of production—despite its degeneration, which commenced in 1924 with the appropriation of political power by the bureaucratic caste led by Stalin. This is why we Trotskyists unconditionally defended the Soviet Union militarily, and this is why the imperialists always desired to destroy it, wanting to regain unimpaired access for their capital into East Europe and the Soviet Union and to be able once again to exploit the peoples living there.

Our opposition on principle to both NATO—the military alliance against the Soviet Union—and the EU and its predecessors derived from our unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union, the DDR [East Germany] and the other deformed workers states of East Europe. The character of the EU underwent a change with the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, when the anti-Soviet aim of the EU disappeared. To assert their own interests more effectively vis-à-vis their U.S. rivals, Germany and France—themselves rival imperialist powers—sought to improve their coordination and, among other things, to maneuver with capitalist Russia.

In 1989, shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall, then French president [François] Mitterrand made French acquiescence to German reunification dependent

Getty

Reuters

Above: Workers protest in Athens on May 4 against austerity measures. Right: German chancellor Angela Merkel with Greek premier George Papandreou at March 25 EU summit in Brussels.

on the two countries' agreement on a common currency. This was supposed to help avert the danger of a newly strengthened Germany going it alone and to prevent confrontations between the two "partners." Additionally, it would be a weapon in the currency war against the international hegemony of the U.S. dollar. From this the euro emerged. But the unity between these two imperialist powers is itself fraught with conflict, as demonstrated by the disputes over shifting production sites and mass firings at Airbus, the Franco-German-dominated airplane manufacturer and defense concern, in the early spring of 2007, as well as by French finance minister Lagarde's criticism of export-fixated German industry. Supported by British imperialism, the U.S. is attempting to slow down or prevent the consolidation of such a competing imperialist bloc.

The Euro and German Imperialism

The attitude of the German bourgeoisie toward the introduction of the euro was mixed to negative, since it saw the danger of ceding sovereignty rights while obtaining a currency that would tend to soften. In particular, the experience of the catastrophic inflation of the 1923 crisis seems to have put a permanent stamp on the German capitalist class. Only four years after the German bourgeoisie had barely averted being overthrown by proletarian revolution in 1918-19, thanks to the betrayal of the SPD and USPD [Independent Social Democratic] leadership, in 1923 the [right-wing] Cuno government sought to shift the costs of [World War I] reparations to French imperialism onto the working class and the lower middle classes by stoking inflation. The result was an intensifying crisis that provided the best chance so far for the German working class to take power into its own hands through socialist revolution—by that time the KPD [German Communist Party] had become a mass party anchored in the proletariat. But the revolutionary leadership of the KPD had not sufficiently broken with the politics of the SPD and allowed the chance to pass.

The price demanded by Germany for introduction of the euro was far-reaching concessions from other members of the euro zone that would guarantee the euro's hardness. Thus no political pressure was to be put on the European Central Bank; the "Stability Pact" [part of the basis for launching the euro] stipulates that new indebtedness of a country cannot exceed 3 percent of the gross domestic product and provides for massive penalties should this figure be exceeded.

Ironically, however, it was Germany under Schröder that was the first to violate this treaty and then used its power to avoid having to pay the fines. Now, with Greece and potentially other countries as well in a much more dangerous situation, Germany is mustering all its forces—and there is not a trace of solidarity with an EU "partner." The chauvinist campaign against Greece is being set in motion so as to prevent the German working class from hitting on the idea of placing blame for the crisis at the feet of the capitalist system and its own rulers. The workers movement in Germany must mobilize in solidarity with Greek workers and all the other victims of the EU imperialists—

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Imperialist EU...

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after all, they'll be confronted with similar attacks in the immediate future. The witchhunt against Greece also serves to split and weaken the multiethnic working class in Germany.

SPD: "Social Demagogy" for German Imperialism

Sigmar Gabriel, the chairman of the SPD, a bourgeois workers party, sang the same tune as the government, blaming Greece and rejecting financial support. To the question of whether Germany should aid Greece, he replied (*Bild* interview, 5 March):

> "Yes. But not by sending money to Athens. This would be wrong and irresponsible! Because we'll be going into debt ourselves for this or would have to cut back on educational and social spending. This would mean: the weakest among us would have us bleed for the gamblers and speculators—an absurd notion!"

As for the poor "bleeding for the gamblers and speculators," the SPD/Green government in 1998-2005 used all its power to ***drive this forward***. For example, by eliminating the tax on sales of equity shares, it freed capital that had been tied to industry and enabled speculation in the financial markets, among other things.

Assuming something of a left face, Gabriel seeks to divert attention from this: "We must fight this 'plague of locusts' and finally pull the plug on the speculators." What a mockery, coming from a party that was in power for 13 years and made the rich infinitely richer and plunged millions of workers and their families into bitter poverty. It was precisely Schröder's Agenda 2010, the Hartz reforms [supposedly freeing up the "frozen" German labor market] and the loosening of regulations on hiring temporary workers that opened the path to more power for the "gamblers and speculators," who are not "American," but are to be found in the Frankfurt bank towers and in the central offices of big German corporations.

The last great act of the Grand Coalition of the CDU and SPD was helping the banks get out of the fix their drive for profit had gotten them into. For this, the capitalists' government had hundreds of billions of euros to spare, "expropriating" the banks' massive debts, so that the country's working class is now paying them through taxes. The superprofits that the banks are making again stem from surplus value created by Greek, East European, German and other workers, which the capitalists are appropriating.

Left Party: For an EU with a Social Sugarcoating

The completely social-democratic Left Party solidarized with the protests of the trade unions and oppressed in Greece against the starvation program imposed by the EU...on paper. (The Left Party came into existence through a fusion of the ex-Stalinist [East German] Party of Democratic Socialism with trade unionists and leftists in the West who were dissatisfied with the SPD.) However, it did not carry out solidarity actions through its base in the trade unions. For the Left Party, "solidarity with Greece" really has nothing to do with class struggle against the German bourgeoisie but only with admonishing it to carry out a "more social" policy. Thus, in a February 26 statement, [Left Party parliamentary spokesman] Ulrich Maurer worried about the cohesion of the capitalist EU and of capitalism itself: "If the gambling continues, a chain reaction is preprogrammed in other countries. Weak countries in the euro zone like Spain, Portugal, Ireland and Italy have chalked up debts of 524 billion euros with German financial institutions. The results would be incalculable." He then calls on Germany to stand in the forefront in assisting Greece.

In a March 5 press release, the Left Party introduced its positive program:

> "Chancellor Merkel must finally rein in the speculators. The Left Party demands a reform of the euro zone: the EU must launch euro loans so as to reduce the risk premium for Greece, the European Central Bank should purchase Greek state bonds to break the power of the speculators and the rating agencies. To avoid this sort of crisis in the future, corporate taxes should be harmonized Europe-wide and a Foreign Economic Stability Pact adopted."

The demands addressed to Merkel to rein in speculators or hurry to the aid of Greece may sound nice but proceed from the false assumption that capitalism is rational and can be steered, and that the German bourgeoisie is not driven by profit. So this is all a dangerous illusion. The Left Party then comes to the conclusion that it simply wants a more social EU, where the effects of capitalism are not so extreme. "Europe needs its own monetary fund, one that will explicitly not take the IMF as its model.:.. The Left Party will support a European Monetary Fund only if it breaks with this policy" (March 8 press statement). That is putting sheep's clothing on the EU capitalist wolf so as to reconcile the working-class base of the Left Party with the EU and prevent it from waging class struggle against the EU and the German capitalists.

This "social Europe" does not exist. The "welfare state" in West Germany owed its existence to the struggles of the working class and the existence of the DDR and the Soviet Union, which impelled the German bourgeoisie to surrender part of its profits. With the destruction of the DDR and the Soviet Union, the German bourgeoisie views this "welfare state" as simply too expensive. What we are seeing in the EU are the centrifugal forces of the various nationalisms that are driving the EU apart—and the euro zone even more so. This will continue.

On the one hand, the EU is a bloc directed against its imperialist rivals, the U.S. and Japan. On the other, it is an instrument of the European imperialists, first and foremost the German imperialists, to exploit the working class of Europe more effectively. It will exist only as long as it serves this aim. Otherwise other instruments will be brought to the fore to advance these interests, above all protectionism—which is on the advance—or, ultimately, imperialist war once again. The solution for Europe's working class lies not in the deceptive "unity" of imperialist/capitalist nation-states but in the *Socialist United States of Europe*.

The Left Party has again and again made clear that it is committed to bourgeois democracy. In a further significant expression of its underlying loyalty to capitalism, the Left Party leadership distances itself from the DDR deformed workers state, where industry and the banks were nationalized. The question of whom nationalization benefits is inseparably linked to which class rules. Thus Commerzbank was "partially nationalized" and Hypo Real Estate wholly nationalized so as to rescue these for the capitalists. In France and Italy, industries have often been controlled by the state, which did not make them any less exploitative. In the [1938] Transitional Program, Trotsky explains how our calls for nationalization differ from those of the reformists à la the Left Party. The phrase "charlatans of the popular front" refers to those who want to forge capitalist coalition governments with the participation of bourgeois workers parties like the SPD or the Left Party:

> "In precisely the same way, we demand the expropriation of the corporations holding monopolies on war industries, railroads, the most important sources of raw materials, etc.
>
> "The difference between these demands and the muddleheaded reformist slogan of 'nationalization' lies in the following: (1) we reject indemnification; (2) we warn the masses against demagogues of the People's Front who, giving lip service to nationalization, remain in reality agents of capital; (3) we call upon the masses to rely only upon their own revolutionary strength; (4) we link up the question of expropriation with that of seizure of power by the workers and farmers.
>
> "The necessity of advancing the slogan of expropriation in the course of daily ***agitation*** in partial form, and not only in our propaganda in its more comprehensive aspects, is dictated by the fact that different branches of industry are on different levels of development, occupy a different place in the life of society, and pass through different stages of the class struggle. Only a general revolutionary upsurge of the proletariat can place the complete expropriation of the bourgeoisie on the order of the day. The task of transitional demands is to prepare the proletariat to solve this problem."

The Left Party is also striving to administer capitalist society in North Rhine-Westphalia. What is required in order to be permitted to do this is demonstrated by Berlin's SPD/Left Party government. In 2002 the PDS (now the Left Party) was brought into the government so as to save the Berlin Bank Company (of which the City of Berlin is incidentally the majority owner) from bankruptcy with guarantees of over 21.6 billion euros. The Berlin government disposed of the profitable parts, now leaving the State of Berlin to pay off the 9.7 billion in losses at the expense of Berlin's workers, pensioners, euro zone. Thus the SPD's Europe expert [Angelica] Schwall-Duren notes in the [Berlin] *Tagesspiegel* (25 February): "The Greek balance of payments deficit is also a product of the German export surplus, which was achieved through slashing wages at the expense of German workers and other EU member states." Speaking for the Left Party, Michael Schlecht explained in a March 8 press statement: "The Left Party calls for, among other things, a foreign economic stability pact to end German wage slashing." Whatever may be meant by "foreign economic stability pact," the Berlin SPD/Left Party-controlled city government, which has been on the cutting edge of slashing public sector wages, has hardly set a good example of ending wage cuts locally. Indeed, just the opposite has happened with these treacherous "socialists" in the government.

As virtually every worker has personally experienced, the reality in Germany has been falling wages. Even harder hit are the unemployed. These are the effects of counterrevolution in the DDR and East Europe 20 years ago and shortly afterward in the Soviet Union itself. The DDR's industry was virtually leveled, robbing its working class of its social power. Shortly after capitalist reunification, assaults on the working class in West Germany were intensified enormously. The then-CDU/FDP government under Helmut Kohl did win some concessions

DVA

Authenticated News International

Left: German tanks in front of the Acropolis during WWII Nazi occupation of Greece. Right: NATO jets, part of imperialists' Cold War arsenal directed at Soviet Union.

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from the trade unions, but a large-scale breakthrough was prevented. It was only the SPD/Green government under Schröder and Fischer that achieved this breakthrough, resulting in a "revival" of the German economy. That government also carried out the first war deployment of the German army since World War II.

With the Hartz laws and the lifting of restrictions on subcontracted labor and short-term wage contracts, the SPD and Greens effectively instituted a nationwide low-wage sector, one that has also been exerting pressure on the wages of permanent employees for a long time now. When hundreds of thousands of subcontracted workers were fired at the outset of the crisis and the short-term contracts of workers were not renewed, [metalworkers union] IG Metall scarcely lifted a finger in their defense. The trade-union bureaucracy sees its clientele as being mainly workers on fixed contracts, whose jobs are supposedly being saved through this sellout of the weaker parts of the working class. But in fact these assaults are also impacting core workforces, albeit with some delay. What's necessary is class struggle to rebuild the unions. *Far a fight ta arganize the unarganized! Equal pay for equol wark! Far* on *end ta the divisian between permanent emplayees, cantracted warkers and workers an short-term cantrocts! One campany, one unian, ane wage scale! Far a closs-struggle trade-unian leodership!*

The "upsurge" of the German economy in the last few years was paid for by the working class through enormously increased exploitation. This was carried out with the active support of the Social Democratic trade-union bureaucracy, which accepted, basically without a fight, one wage reduction after another and a massive worsening of working conditions. This took place, and continues to take place, under the pretext of "preserving jobs" as part of the framework of the nationalist campaign for "Production-Site Germany" [maintaining Germany as a manufacturing center].

The nadir, at least for now, of this tragedy of sellout and betrayal can be seen in this year's wage contract negotiations in the metalworking industries and in public service. IG Metall did not even present a wage demand and immediately obtained a contract with vague promises and clauses rolling back workers' gains. Following a warning strike, [public employees union] Ver.di called for mediation and accepted a lousy deal that can only mean a further drop in real wages. This is having a negative effect on union membership: the number of [union confederation] DGB members fell from eight million in 1999 to 6.26 million in 2009. Feeling themselves challenged, the union tops are attempting to bureaucratically silence leftist oppositionists in the unions.

The Social Democratic trade-union leadership is attempting as far as possible to stifle all struggles in embryo, since it fundamentally shares the nationalist conception and lie that what is good for the employer is also good for the workers. This includes conspiring with the bosses to improve by hook or by crook the "competitiveness" of the given firm, i.e., the bosses' rate of profit. At the beginning of December, the bureaucrats' strategy came to a dead end, as workers at Daimler's Sindelfingen plant began protests against the transfer of 60 percent of [Mercedes] C-Class production to [the German city of] Bremen and 20 percent to the U.S. Rightly fearing loss of their jobs, they struck effectively for several days. But the thrust of the struggle was nationalist and protectionist. Thus one banner stigmatized the Daimler Executive Board as "vaterlandslose Gesellen" ["men without a fatherland"]; the underlying tenor was that Mercedes had to remain "German" and the C-Class in Stuttgart.

Bloomberg

Left: Production line at Mercedes Benz plant in Sindelfingen, near Stuttgart, Germany. Social-democratic union tops helped oversee drastic decline in union membership.

A deal was made that would supposedly guarantee the Sindelfingen jobs, with production of the SL roadster being shifted from Bremen to Sindelfingen. This led to protests and strikes in January by Daimler workers in Bremen, who demanded that production of the SL roadster remain in Bremen. These struggles were praised by oppositional trade unionists like those of "Alternative" and virtually the entire left, without the slightest criticism of the nationalist thrust or the divisions between workers in the various plants.

The Berlin *Alternative* (8 December 2009), a Daimler workers' newspaper, states: "The goal must be to mobilize coworkers in all plants comprehensively to preserve all jobs." While this is correct, *Alternative* maintains total silence on the nationalist campaign against the transfer of 20 percent of the C-Class to the U.S. Nor can they do anything else, since they basically share the conception of "co-determining" what is produced where. This is nothing but wretched co-management and class collaboration: "Critical fellow workers...demand that the transfer of the C-Class must be stopped." Thus in its report on the Bremen strikes, the 23 February *Alternative* fails to mention that these were directed against the transfer of the SL roadster to Sindelfingen.

The questions of what and where to invest will be a matter of concern for the workers when they rule and the plants belong to them through the expropriation of the capitalists. Wanting to "co-determine" today only chains the workers to their own exploiters and divides them —country against country, plant against plant, young against old, etc. What is required instead is a struggle of class against class—one based on international solidarity that also includes American workers and puts an end to the playing off of workers from various localities and companies against each another. IG Metall can support the struggle to organize workers in Daimler plants in the non-union U.S. South through waging class struggle against the Daimler bosses in Germany, thereby breaking the downward spiral of wages. What is necessary is a fight *for distributing wark ta all hands at full pay! Far a radical sharten-ing of the warkweek at full pay!* But to achieve the right to work for everyone, trade-union struggle alone is insufficient —capitalism must be overthrown worldwide through socialist revolutions.

Olympia/Action Press

Racist "Fortress Europe": Italian police seize refugee ship in Sicilian port of Catania, April 2006.

For Class Struggle Against German Bourgeoisie and Capitalist EU!

In reality, the current conflicts demonstrate that the EU is an imperialist bloc that will sooner or later break apart over its contradictions, and opposition to the EU from an internationalist perspective is very necessary indeed. *Down with the EU and racist Fortress Eurape!*

As is the case at Daimler, in many industries in Germany, Turkish, Greek and German workers as well as workers from the former Yugoslavia have been working side by side for decades. They must be mobilized in the fight against the German capitalist class, as well as the EU dominated by it, if they are to defend themselves, the Greek working class and the workers of Europe. The German capitalists profit endlessly by driving Greek workers into misery. They are planning the same thing here, especially once the elections in North Rhine-Westphalia are over. The main hindrance to fighting this program is the social-democratic misleaders, whether from the SPD or the Left Party, who act as the doctor at the sickbed of capitalism.

The multiethnic German working class, with its various components from Mediterranean lands, the Balkans and East Europe—with often more militant class-struggle traditions—possesses the organic links to support the struggles of Greek workers, of Turkish and Kurdish workers in Turkey as well as of workers in many other countries. Above and beyond this, a joint internationalist struggle here in Germany would be seen as a beacon to the working class of East Europe and worldwide to take up the struggle against increasing exploitation and oppression. Such a struggle could mark the beginning of the end for the EU imperialist alliance and introduce a struggle for the Socialist United States of Europe, which would eliminate exploitation, racism and national oppression in an internationally coordinated planned economy! Central to this is the reforging of the Fourth International as world party of proletarian revolution, the task the International Communist League has set for itself. ■

Detroit...

(continued fram page 3)

powers and prisons, first under the "war on crime" and especially later with the "war on drugs." Beginning in the 1980s, the racist "anti-drug" campaign fueled a historic rise in the prison population. From about 40,000 people incarcerated for drug offenses in 1980, there has been a *mare than twelve-fald increose* to over 500,000 today, with black people accounting for more than 60 percent of the total.

The mass incarceration of blacks and also Latinos was overseen by Republican and Democratic presidents alike and enforced at every level of the government, including by Detroit's Democratic Party city administrations, from Coleman Young to David Bing. Black Democratic politicians like Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton early on placed themselves in the forefront of this racist drive. Now Barack Obama, like George W. Bush before him, has used the pretense of a global "war on drugs" to expand U.S. imperialism's military presence around the world, to back death squads in Colombia and to jack up racist anti-immigrant repression along the Mexican border. We say: Decriminalize drugs—down with all laws against "crimes without victims"!

Now, in an effort to divert anger in Detroit over the killing of Aiyana Stanley-Jones, Democratic Congressman John Conyers Jr. has requested that the Department of Justice launch an investigation. But if the Feds step in, it will be to rehabilitate the city cops so that they can better go about their job, which is to terrorize black and poor neighborhoods and repress labor struggle. This system of racist capitalist repression—cops, courts and prisons—cannot be reformed to serve the interests of the exploited and oppressed. The only way to get rid of cop terror is the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist profit system, for which the gangs in hlue are the front line of defense.

Meanwhile, the grieving family invited Sharpton to give the eulogy for Aiyana. Obscenely, Sharpton used the occasion to *blome the victims* of murderous cop terror. This former FBI fink intoned: "I'd rather tell you to start looking at the man in the mirror. We've all done something that contributed to this."

The embattled masses of Detroit don't need to look at "the man in the mirror"—they need the mohilization of the multiracial working class at the head of the oppressed in struggle against police violence, chronic unemployment, austerity, crumbling hospitals and schools. They need a militant union leadership to turn around the one-sided class war that has been ruthlessly waged by the capitalist rulers. They do not need capitalist Democratic Party politicians who parade themselves as friends of workers and minorities and then turn around and pimp off their misery and their tragedies. They need a revolutionary workers party to lead the struggle against black oppression—the cornerstone of American capitalism—which can be eradicated only through socialist revolution. Justice and equality can be accomplished only by smashing the capitalist state, expropriating the bloodsucking capitalists and establishing workers rule. This is the fight to which the Spartacist League is dedicated. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

German Trotskyists Say: Solidarity with Greek Workers

Financial Crisis Rocks Imperialist EU

European leaders agreed in mid May on an almost $1 trillion package of credits for Greece and other heavily indebted European Union (EU) countries, clearly expecting that committing such an unprecedented sum would calm jittery financial markets. Instead, capitalists worldwide became even more fearful that, with a number of

Reuters photos

Above: Line in front of government job center in Madrid, Spain, January 5. Below: Private and public sector unions protest in Marseille, France, against threat to raise minimum retirement age, May 27.

SPARTAKIST

EU governments groaning under the weight of huge deficits, European banks with large holdings of Greek and other government debt might be facing crippling losses. With global financiers cutting back on lending within the euro zone, many industrial companies and even banks are increasingly finding their sources of credit cut off. This all raises the spectre of a full-blown financial crisis in Europe that could potentially trigger a renewed economic downturn worldwide.

Capitalist rulers across Europe—especially in the most debt-ridden countries like Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain—are determined to make workers pay for the growing economic crisis. The austerity measures that governments are trying to ram through include slashing the wages of public-sector workers, gutting pensions and jacking up sales and other taxes.

Workers have not been taking these attacks lying down. Greece has had a total of five one-day general strikes so far this year, with another projected for sometime in June to coincide with the debate in parliament on a bill to slash pensions. On May 27, hundreds of thousands demonstrated across France as strikes against a government plan to raise the retirement age delayed flights, closed schools and interrupted train traffic. In Spain, a public sector strike has been called for June 8, while in Italy the six-million-strong CGIL union federation has announced a nationwide stoppage for June 25. This rising line of working-class struggles points to the need to forge revolutionary parties that can lead the proletariat, at the head of all the oppressed, to sweep away the bankrupt capitalist order.

We reprint below an abridged translation of an article published in *Spartakist* No. 183 (May 2010), publication of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

* * *

Trade unions in Greece carried out two nationwide general strikes on February 24 and March 11 in response to assaults on wages and pensions by the nationalist government headed by George Papandreou of PASOK [Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement]. The Greek government is carrying out a program dictated in large part by the European Union and imperialist Germany, the dominant power in the EU. The Greek ruling class is, however, not just a minion of the EU; it is also using this opportunity to smash the power of the Greek trade unions and enrich itself even more blatantly. As to supposedly shifting the burden of the crisis onto "high incomes" through new tax rates, with which PASOK wants to calm the anger of the poorer layers of the Greek population, *Manager Magazin* (24 February) reported on the response of the Greek bourgeoisie: "Capital Flight: Greeks Transferring Billions to Safe Havens."

Here in Germany, the bourgeoisie has unleashed a chauvinist campaign with blanket accusations that Greece had been living "beyond its means" and had engaged in "lies" and "deception" regarding the Greek budget deficit, etc. Josef Schlarmann, chairman of the CDU [right-wing Christian Democratic Union] association for medium-sized industry, went so far as to suggest that the Greek government should sell "uninhabited islands" and other state property to cut its deficit. This was seized upon by [the tahloid] *Bild* and turned into a campaign that ran for weeks. In an expression of the German bourgeoisie's imperial arrogance, EU members Greece, Spain and Portugal as well as Italy and Ireland—increasingly hard-hit by the economic crisis—have been chauvinistically stigmatized with the acronym "PIGS."

Germany has traditionally viewed the Balkans in particular as its backyard, with the peoples of the region forced to toe the line or else directly suffer the jackboot of German imperialism. In World War II, German imperialism occupied Greece and Yugoslavia, employing the bloodiest means in its efforts to suppress the heroic resistance. And at the beginning of the 1990s, German imperialism played a key role in promoting counterrevolution by goading the peoples of the Yugoslav deformed workers state into bloody internecine, nationalist wars. In 1999, the SPD [Social Democratic Party]/Green government under [Gerhard] Schröder and [Joschka] Fischer along with its NATO allies participated in the U.S.-led war against Serbia, establishing an occupation regime in large parts of the former Yugoslavia. Now economic means are being employed in an attempt to force Greece, an "ally" and EU member, to cooperate and squeeze the last drop of blood out of the Greek working class and oppressed. *German army out of the Balkans!*

The last few weeks have been dominated by power struggles in the German government and the EU over how to deal with the catastrophic situation. Finance Minister [Wolfgang] Schäuble suggested setting up a European monetary fund in order to avert such catastrophes in the future. But Chancellor [Angela] Merkel, fearing Germany would ultimately be stuck with the bill, was averse to this plan, instead suggesting that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) deal with Greece. *Der Spiegel* (22 March), on the other hand, cites Schäuble stating that "the American-dominated IMF [is regarded] as an extension of U.S. foreign policy and has no business in the euro zone." Reflected in the government debate is the continual argument over whether German foreign policy should orient toward the U.S., as desired by the "Atlanticists," or toward a more independent course leaning on Russian support, as openly promoted

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For a Socialist United States of Europe!

WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 961 | C-701 | 2 July 2010

Big Oil, White House—Partners in Crime

Gulf Coast Disaster: Capitalist Profit Drive Kills

Eleven oil workers died a horrible death on April 20 when the British Petroleum (BP) Deepwater Horizon rig exploded in the Gulf of Mexico. The workers were not represented by a union; their safety in this dangerous job was in the hands of a corporation notorious for cutting corners to save money. As media reports and eyewitness accounts from survivors have made clear, a crucial piece of safety equipment, the blowout preventer, was malfunctioning. Oil worker Tyrone Benton, one of the survivors, told the BBC's *Panorama* program that he had spotted a leak and that BP and the rig's owner, Transocean, were informed. But as AOL News (21 June) put it, "repairing the control pod would have meant stopping drilling work on the rig, which was costing BP $500,000 a day to operate."

Since April 20, two cleanup workers have died. One of them, despondent over the destruction to his livelihood, committed suicide. The death toll will climb. Cleanup workers are being exposed to deadly chemicals, including an oil dispersant so toxic it's been banned in Europe. The disaster is ruining the lives of countless working men and women—longtime black and white residents, Native Americans, immigrant Vietnamese fishermen—whose way of life is sinking in the oil-filled waters and wetlands of the Gulf, where beaches are covered with filthy oil globs ("tarballs").

Many of those involved in the cleanup effort, which includes prison convict labor, are getting sick. At least eleven have been hospitalized with symptoms related to exposure to inhaled irritants. Respirators have not been issued. BP at first threatened to fire cleanup workers who brought their own, including those involved in burning off oil or working near areas where toxic dispersants are being used. BP also initially gagged cleanup workers through contracts barring them from talking to the media. Earlier, Transocean workers on the rig had to sign forms asserting that they did not witness the explosion—the one they just survived.

The Gulf Coast disaster is enormous, incalculable. It is ravaging a region that continues to reel from Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath—a man-made disaster that exposed the venality, class arrogance and utter contempt of the capitalist rulers for black, poor and working people. Today, oil continues to gush into the Gulf of Mexico at a rate of 60,000 to upward of 100,000 barrels a day. Even if the plan for drilling a relief well is successful, it won't be ready until the end of August at the earliest. Marine life has been devastated, imperiling some of the richest fisheries in the world. The Gulf Coast disaster has long since surpassed the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill off Alaska's coast, the effects of which continue to be felt, both in terms of a ruined fishing industry and in illnesses suffered by cleanup workers and local residents.

Fritz/McClatchy

Reuters

April 20 Deepwater Horizon oil rig explosion killed eleven workers. Above: Photos of the dead, displayed at memorial service in Jackson, Mississippi.

Save a million dollars or so, kill eleven workers: such is the deadly math of the oil barons and the government that serves their interests. It's not a matter of this or that "energy policy," or who is running the regulatory agencies, all of which are totally interpenetrated with the corporations. Under Barack Obama as under George W. Bush and their predecessors, whether Democratic or Republican, the government exists to serve the interests of the tiny class of capitalists who derive their obscene wealth from exploiting labor.

At the heart of the Gulf Coast disaster is the *naked drive for profit* that drives the irrational capitalist system.

Criminality Upon Criminality

As *Rolling Stone* (24 June) documented in its article "The Spill, the Scandal and the President":

> "BP shaved $500,000 off its overhead by deploying a blowout preventer without a remote-control trigger—a fail-safe measure required in many countries but not mandated by MMS [Minerals Management Service], thanks to intense industry lobbying. It opted to use cheap, single-walled piping for the well, and installed only six of the 21 cement spacers recommended by its contractor, Halliburton—decisions that significantly increased the risk of a severe explosion. It also skimped on critical testing that could have shown

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Economic Crisis and the Capitalist State.....4

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All Labor Must Defend Miners Union!

Mexico: Brutal Cop Attack Breaks Cananea Strike

The following is a translation of a leaflet issued on June 14 by our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México.

On June 7, some 2,000 cops from federal, state and municipal police forces brutally broke the nearly three-year-long strike of miners at Cananea, Sonora [near the border with Arizona] organized in Local 65 of the SNTMMSRM [miners and metal workers] union. The pretext was a resolution of the Federal Conciliation and Arbitration Board, issued on June 4, which declared the "end of the labor relationship" (thus laying off the entire workforce) and put an "end to the strike the workers maintained at the mine" (*La Jornada*, 8 June). Illustrating that the ultimate goal is to get rid of the miners union, Javier Lozano (Secretary of Labor) and [mining company] Grupo México plan to impose a company union linked to the Federación Nacional de Sindicatos Independientes (FNSI, National Federation of Independent Unions), which was created and sponsored by the bourgeoisie of the city of Monterrey, and give it the collective contract that would come with reopening the mine.

The workers refuted the government's transparent lies that the action had been "peaceful" and that there had been "no casualties." In seizing the mine, police used tear gas and, according to Marco Antonio del Toro, a lawyer for the miners union, two workers were shot. Five miners were arrested and later declared that they had been tied up and forced to kneel on a hill for several hours. With incredible cruelty, police forces seized the facilities of the Pasta de Conchos mine in a simultaneous action, dispersing people who have been mourning the death of 65 miners in the tragedy of February 2006 [a mine explosion] and arresting the mothers of two of the fallen miners. Several unions, including prominently the United Steel Workers (USW) of the U.S., have declared their solidarity with the miners union. We Spartacists protest this new attack and call on the workers movement as a whole to mobilize in defense of the miners union. *Defend the miners union!*

The state and the capitalists are determined to bring the miners union to its knees and get rid of its leadership, which has been facing charges for several years now. From the beginning, we have called for dropping all charges against the leadership of the miners union, including [Napoleón] Gómez Urrutia—without giving them any political support—on the basis of the elementary principle summed up in the slogan: bourgeois state, hands off the unions!

In the crusade against the miners union, the Lázaro Cárdenas [steel] workers came first; they managed to achieve victory in their 2006 strike after heroically repelling a brutal police attack (including state police under the command of the PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution]) in April of that year, at the cost of two dead workers. Then it was Cananea's turn. (This is not the first time the state has launched an attack to break this strike.) In January 2008, hundreds of police attacked the strikers. Despite the fact that police temporarily took control of the mine, they failed in the end and the strike went on.

The union's answer at the time was a national eight-hour strike involving some 25,000 workers from 85 steel plants and mines. By June 2010, the strike at Cananea, a place famous for the heroic 1906 strike [whose repression by Mexican troops and Arizona Rangers was an important factor in the lead-up to the Mexican Revolution of 1910-20], had caused losses to the bosses of at least $1.5 billion—the Cananea workers hit the bosses hard. The vengeful government, which is the bosses' executive committee, wants revenge. In this new attempt, the government felt emboldened by the relatively easy victory it achieved in destroying the SME electrical workers union last October, when it did not face a major response from labor.

Should this new attack on the miners union—the union that has been the most combative in the country over the last several years—succeed, it would pave the road for similar attacks on the continuing [miners] strikes in Taxco and Sombrerete. It would mean a crucial victory for the bosses and their state in their long-time offensive against this union, and it would be yet another terrible blow against the entire labor movement. After the SME, the miners union is simply next on the list. ***This new attack must not pass unchallenged!***

Despite the militancy of the ranks, the bureaucracy leading the miners union itself shares central responsibility for the enormous defeat inflicted on the SME—a defeat for the entire working class. As we wrote in *Espartaco* (January 2010 supplement), "The responsibility for this ominous defeat lies with the pro-capitalist leadership of the falsely 'independent' unions, such as the UNT [National Union of Workers], that line up behind the bourgeois PRD, as well as that of the miners union, who only mobilized the ranks in order to relieve pressure and did not organize any strike action that would hit the bosses where it hurts—in their pockets." Through their actions, the pro-capitalist union bureaucracies hung the SME out to dry while sowing illusions in the courts, the bourgeois PRD and the PRD's actions in Congress. Today, in the face of the new government attack, the miners long for a forceful response from their leadership: "And when will the national strike take place? Since the beginning you have been saying that, and nothing happens!" exclaimed a worker, directing himself to the national leadership in Cananea on June 7 (*La Jornada*, 8 June).

Nonetheless, up until now the strategy of the national leadership of the miners union has been limited to legal actions such as *amparos* [constitutional provision of protection against the actions of state authorities]. While the union should use every legal measure to defend itself against the government and the bosses of the powerful Grupo México, workers must understand that ***there is no justice in the capitalist courts***. The central purpose of the courts is to defend private property

continued on page 12

Reuters

June 7: Federal police outside Mexico's biggest copper mine in Cananea. Cop mobilization broke three-year-long miners strike.

TROTSKY

LENIN

Capitalist Profit Drive Breeds Disaster

More than 130 years ago, Friedrich Engels, cofounder with Karl Marx of scientific socialism, spelled out the disastrous consequences of the capitalist system of production for profit. Engels' indictment rings even more true today.

The individual capitalists, who dominate production and exchange, are able to concern themselves only with the most immediate useful effect of their actions. Indeed, even this useful effect—inasmuch as it is a question of the usefulness of the article that is produced or exchanged—retreats far into the background, and the sole incentive becomes the profit to be made on selling.

Classical political economy, the social science of the bourgeoisie, in the main examines only social effects of human actions in the fields of production and exchange that are actually intended. This fully corresponds to the social organisation of which it is the theoretical expression. As individual capitalists are engaged in production and exchange for the sake of the immediate profit, only the nearest, most immediate results must first be taken into account. As long as the individual manufacturer or merchant sells a manufactured or purchased commodity with the usual coveted profit, he is satisfied and does not concern himself with what afterwards becomes of the commodity and its purchasers. The same thing applies to the natural effects of the same actions. What cared the Spanish planters in Cuba, who burned down forests on the slopes of the mountains and obtained from the ashes sufficient fertiliser for *one* generation of very highly profitable coffee trees—what cared they that the heavy tropical rainfall afterwards washed away the unprotected upper stratum of the soil, leaving behind only bare rock! In relation to nature, as to society, the present mode of production is predominantly concerned only about the immediate, the most tangible result; and then surprise is expressed that the more remote effects of actions directed to this end turn out to be quite different, are mostly quite the opposite in character; that the harmony of supply and demand is transformed into the very reverse opposite, as shown by the course of each ten years' industrial cycle...; that private ownership based on one's own labour must of necessity develop into the expropriation of the workers, while all wealth becomes more and more concentrated in the hands of non-workers.

—Friedrich Engels, "The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man" (1876)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 961 **2 July 2010**

Letter

BP Disaster

Brooklyn, NY
22 June 2010

To the Editors of Workers Vanguard:

I'm disappointed you have not yet run an article about the Gulf oil blowout. The ruling class is raping the planet, fouling their own nest, yet they can't stop themselves. Having allowed high-risk deep sea drilling without the technology to deal with inevitable accidents, the government can do no more than impotently wag its finger at BP, while Obama makes multiple do-nothing visits to the Gulf to show that he "cares."

Could there be a better argument for socialism?

Fraternally,
Jack L.

As Obama Sends More Troops to Mexican Border

Outrage Over Border Patrol Killings

On June 7, a U.S. Border Patrol guard in El Paso, Texas, killed Sergio Adrián Hernández with a bullet to the face, shot across the Río Bravo into Mexico. No sooner had Hernández's blood dried in Ciudad Juárez than the Border Patrol and FBI launched a vile campaign to justify the coldblooded killing of this 15-year-old boy. First they claimed he had been throwing rocks at the border guards. Then they changed their story, saying that he had been "smuggling" immigrants.

The U.S. government's justification for killing a Mexican—on Mexican soil—by claiming that throwing rocks and helping immigrants cross the border are "crimes" punishable by summary execution only underscores the American imperialist rulers' racist arrogance and contempt for Mexican lives. After defending the Border Patrol killer in a June 8 press release and emphasizing that the only offense committed was a supposed "assault on federal officers," the FBI vowed to carry out a "civil rights" investigation—i.e., a whitewash—with the killer kept on paid leave.

This killing was preceded by the gruesome homicide of Anastasio Hernández Rojas, a Mexican construction worker and father of five, by state forces. On May 28 in San Diego, California, a lynch mob of some 20 Customs and Border Protection agents clubbed and tased Hernández Rojas to death while he was being deported. Like the killing of Sergio Hernández, this incident was filmed on a cell phone and broadcast on television and the Internet. Millions of outraged viewers on both sides of the border have listened to the eyewitnesses' screams of protest and the dying man's cries of "No! No! Help Me! Stop, please!"

According to a report by the Mexican government, U.S. federal agents killed or wounded five people on the Mexican border in the final year of Bush's administration, 12 people in the first year of Obama's administration and 17 people in just the first five months of 2010! President Obama now plans to deploy 1,200 National Guardsmen to the border, add 1,000 Border Patrol agents to the 20,000 already there, increase the border security budget by $500 million and deploy two more unmanned aircraft, bringing the total to six drones.

Make no mistake: this is Obama's deadly program for "immigration reform." His chief deputy in this operation is Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano, whom he thanked in an April 23 Rose Garden ceremony for naturalized military personnel "for leading our efforts to achieve comprehensive immigration reform so that America keeps faith with our heritage as both a nation of immigrants and a nation of laws." It was Napolitano who boasted that Obama's administration smashed Bush's records by deporting 387,790 immigrants in fiscal year 2009. The Obama administration is true to the racist heritage of this "nation of laws," a history that includes black enslavement, Jim Crow segregation, legal lynching under the death penalty, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and Japanese American internment camps during World War II.

The capitalist system is based on the brutal exploitation of all labor, with the ruling class inflaming racial and ethnic hostilities to keep the working class divided and thus ensure a greater extraction of profit. The bourgeoisie at different times has varying approaches to immigration. But at a time of economic crisis such as this, arrests and deportations of layers of immigrants deemed surplus are the order of the day, no matter which party is in power.

In his April 23 speech, Obama raised his criticism of the infamous Arizona anti-immigrant pass law SB1070 (see *WV* No. 958, 7 May). Obama complained that "the recent efforts in Arizona...threatened to undermine basic notions of fairness that we cherish as Americans, as well as the trust between police and their communities that is so crucial to keeping us safe." According to Obama's Orwellian logic, undocumented immigrants need to "trust" the same police officers who, in many localities across the country, are arresting them and turning them over for deportation!

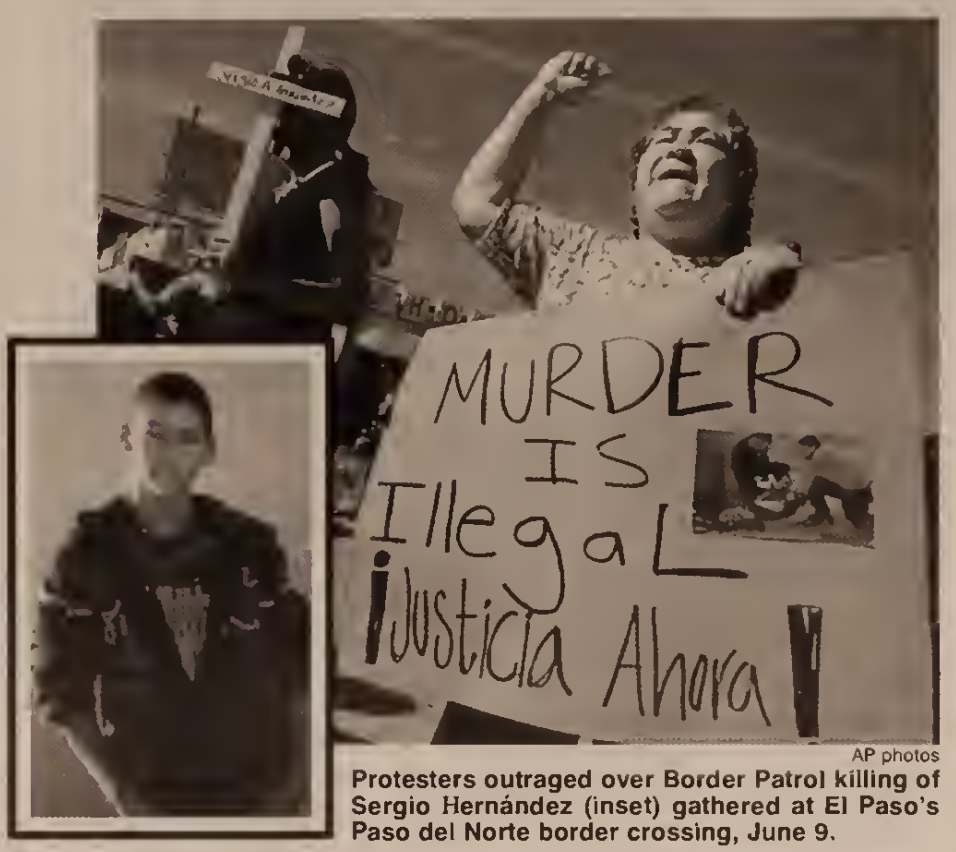
To top it all off, U.S. imperialism's war-criminal-in-chief and overseer of the domestic plantation later vowed to investigate the "civil rights and other implications" of the Arizona law. Obama wants the federal government, not the states, to dictate the terms of persecuting immigrants, and he finds the Arizona law's overt legal codification of racial profiling an international embarrassment.

In this same speech, Obama's message was clear on one "path to citizenship" that he favors: enlist in the imperialist military, go slaughter people overseas and you too can "earn" your papers. "Like so many others," he intoned, these military men and women "met their responsibilities. They played by the rules. They have earned their citizenship."

While the reformist left seeks to pressure the Democrats in Washington, we know that they are simply representatives of the class enemy. For example, take Democratic Congressman Luis Gutierrez from Chicago, who got arrested protesting the Arizona law. A key component of his "immigration reform" bill last year (H.R. 4321) was more border security. That is, more Sergios, more Anastasios dead on the border. The Arizona boycott is really a cheap ploy by Democratic Party politicians to deflect attention away from the thousands of immigrant lives destroyed every day by the Obama administration and by Democratic Party-run state and local governments.

All workers must understand that their fate is vitally linked to that of undocumented immigrants. Attacks on immigrants will only weaken the labor movement further. At the same time, immigrants form a key component of the U.S. working class that has enormous potential social power. Moreover, immigrants are a living bridge to the proletariat in their home countries, many of which have traditions of militant class struggle.

Labor needs to vigorously protest the border killings, oppose the militarization of the border, demand an end to all deportations and organize immigrant workers. For full citizenship rights for all immigrants! This calls for a fight against the class-collaborationism of the chauvinist, pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy, which hogties labor's power through its support to the Democratic Party. We of the Spartacist League fight to break workers and youth from the Democratic Party and to build a workers party that will be a tribune of the people and fight for socialist revolution. That is the only way to put an end to the capitalist system and all its murderous brutality once and for all.■



AP photos

Protesters outraged over Border Patrol killing of Sergio Hernández (inset) gathered at El Paso's Paso del Norte border crossing, June 9.

After 15-Week Lockout

Boron Settlement–Setback for ILWU

The lockout of nearly 600 borax miners in the small desert town of Boron, California by Rio Tinto, a notorious international union-busting mining conglomerate, generated widespread sympathy from workers across Southern California and around the world. But this sympathy was never translated into ***working-class struggle*** against the company's drive to destroy the miners' union, Local 30 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU). Instead, the misleaders of the ILWU kept other members of the union on the job, processing and shipping scab borax throughout the lockout, which began in early February. Having strangled labor solidarity—most importantly, "hot-cargoing" and building mass pickets to stop all shipments of scab products—the ILWU tops are now hailing a six-year contract settlement that was reached on May 14 as a "victory."

While Rio Tinto did not get away with enforcing its first contract offer, which would have completely eviscerated the union, the deal the ILWU tops rushed through for approval by the Boron miners was no victory. Its provisions effectively gut seniority, which is vital to the union's defense of its members against the caprices of the bosses. An article in the ILWU's *Dispatcher* (April/May 2010) reports that seniority was maintained in the case of layoffs, but the settlement allows the company to retain "skilled employees... irrespective of their plant seniority, as it deems necessary" in the event of a "reduction in force." For promotions and job transfers, seniority counts only if the company determines that other "qualifications" are met. Moreover, the settlement allows Rio Tinto to contract out work to non-union labor during supposedly busy periods.

The new contract replaces guaranteed pension benefits for new-hires with a 401(k) plan. At the ratification meeting, Local 30 members cited in the *Dispatcher* article correctly argued that "this 'two-tier' retirement plan could undermine unity between new-hires and veteran employees, erode the pension funding base for current employees, and will eventually eliminate the defined benefits pensions for the next generation of workers." In short, while the Boron miners' union local was not destroyed, this deal puts in place contract terms that undermine the unity and solidarity that are vital to the union's preservation.

Promoting the settlement, ILWU International press spokesman Craig Merrilees declared: "With a union that had a reputation for being a strong and militant union, [to fail] would have had massive implications for workers everywhere" (*In These Times*, 19 May). But far from

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NOTICE

***Workers Vanguard* skips alternate issues in June, July and August. Our next issue will be dated July 30.**

Liberals Push Regulation Hoax

Economic Crisis and the Capitalist State

Throughout the capitalist world, the human cost of the worst economic crisis since the 1930s has been staggering. In the European Union (EU), where a financial crisis now threatens a renewed downturn, 23 million workers are out of work. Unemployment for those under 25 is running over 20 percent; in Spain, youth unemployment is over 44 percent.

Mears/Detroit News

Getty

Left: 50,000 people crowded Detroit's Cobo Center in October 2009 for 5,000 applications for federal aid to help pay rent and utilities. Right: L.A. union building trade workers rally at City Hall to save jobs, April 14.

PART ONE

The early stages of the current economic crisis overlapped with the 2008 hunger crisis, in which skyrocketing food prices raised the spectre of mass starvation (see "Imperialism Starves World's Poor," *WV* Nos. 919 and 920, 29 August and 12 September 2008). Since 2008, some 130 million additional people have been driven into the ranks of the chronically hungry and undernourished. In many countries food prices have barely fallen from their peaks of two years ago, and in some Asian markets staples like rice and wheat are today selling *above* their 2008 levels. The worldwide total of those who are desperately hungry has, for the first time, climbed to more than one billion people—roughly one-sixth of humanity.

In the U.S., the number of people classified as living in extreme poverty—those unable to provide for the most basic needs of food, shelter and health care—has risen by more than a third over the past decade and now totals 17 million. Some 15 million workers are officially unemployed, a record ***46 percent*** of them for longer than six months. When those who are constrained to work part-time or have abandoned the job hunt are included in the count, the number rises to over 26 million—almost 17 percent of the workforce. Since the housing price bubble burst in 2007, there have been over seven million foreclosures. And the number of working people who face being thrown into the street is on the rise, with a record 932,000 foreclosures in the first quarter of this year, up 16 percent from the same period last year.

As always in racist capitalist America, black people, typically the last hired and first fired, have been hit the hardest. Even high-income black borrowers are 80 percent more likely to lose their homes to foreclosure than their white counterparts. Nationally, the jobless rate for young black men aged 16-24 has reached Great Depression levels of over 34 percent. In rust-belt states like Illinois, Wisconsin and Ohio, joblessness for blacks is running over 20 percent; in Michigan, the figure is expected to soon hit 27 percent. Nearly one out of two black men in Milwaukee is without a job. Children of immigrant, black, Latino or Native American parents are more than twice as likely as white children to be living in poverty.

Barack Obama and the banker-politicians in his administration, following in the steps of George W. Bush, showered hundreds of billions of taxpayers' dollars on their financier friends and the auto bosses. Banks can borrow money from the Federal Reserve (the U.S. central bank) at 0.5 percent interest and purchase risk-free Treasury bonds paying 3 percent. Trying to kick-start the economy, the government is practically giving money away to the banks. This has in turn fueled a renewed speculative binge propelling a wide range of price bubbles, from corporate shares in stock exchanges to precious metals and fossil fuels—and food items.

Much of what currently looks like economic growth is in fact the froth generated by speculative bubbles. Over the past year, as millions were driven to the brink of starvation, the number of billionaires in the world increased by almost 30 percent to over 1,000. The net worth of this select club skyrocketed 50 percent and now totals a cool $3.6 trillion.

No sooner had Barack Obama signed into law his health care "reform"—a boondoggle for big business that cuts Medicare and taxes union health plans—than Washington was abuzz with talk of "retooling" Social Security by cutting benefits and increasing taxes, a task that his right-wing Republican predecessor, George W. Bush, took on without success. The *New York Times* (22 March) wrote that "the promise of future reductions would immediately reassure global markets fretful that the United States' debt is already its highest since World War II.... That argument appeals to Mr. Obama."

From the U.S. to the EU, capitalist governments are taking the ax to wages, pensions and social welfare programs in an attempt to make working people pay for the economic crisis. Simultaneously, they are mooting various financial regulation schemes in a vain attempt to overcome the sharp economic crises that are and always have been an inherent feature of the capitalist system. Chief among these measures is the much-ballyhooed bank "reform" that is passing through the U.S. Congress. When the final details were worked out, one Wall Street banker said, "We are all breathing a sigh of relief here.... We can live with this" (*Financial Times*, 25 June). At any rate, with the European financial crisis and the ongoing housing crisis in the U.S. threatening a "double-dip" recession, this amounts to something like moving the deck chairs on the *Titanic*.

This situation amply demonstrates the truth of the statement by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the 1848 *Communist Manifesto* that "the executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." This understanding represents a fundamental dividing line between ourselves—Marxist revolutionaries—and self-proclaimed "socialists" who promote illusions in the possibility of reforming the capitalist state, which in the U.S. they seek to do by exerting pressure on the Democratic Party. To such class collaborationism we counterpose the road of *class struggle*. The key is to break the political chains that shackle labor to the capitalist political parties and state. Break with the Democrats! For a workers party that fights for a workers government! There will be no end to the misery wrought by the capitalist rulers and their boom-bust economic system until the working class seizes power through a socialist revolution that smashes the capitalist state and erects in its place a workers state—the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Exploitation and Profit

The wealth of the capitalist class—the owners of the means of production—derives from the *exploitation* of labor. As Marx explained in *Capital*, his classic analysis of the capitalist economy, the wage-worker is constrained to sell to the capitalist his ability to work. The wage that a worker is paid corresponds to that part of the working day during which he produces the equivalent of what it costs to maintain himself and his family. The other part of the day, he works without remuneration, creating "surplus value," which the capitalist pockets in the form of profit.

Over the past three and a half decades, in which working people in this country have largely been on the losing end of the class struggle, the rich have fabulously increased their wealth, mainly by holding down and driving down wages. Pay for production and other nonsupervisory workers—80 percent of the private workforce—is today 9 percent lower in real terms (i.e., adjusted for inflation) than it was in 1973. During that same period, labor productivity (output per worker) increased by more than 80 percent.

Break with the Democrats!
For a Workers Party That Fights for a Workers Government!

In short, capitalists have enormously ratcheted up what Marx called the rate of exploitation—the ratio of the share of the product of labor appropriated by the capitalists to the share represented by the worker's wage. They did this by combining mass layoffs with extracting increased output from those workers still employed, including through forced overtime. Last year, through layoffs and short time, total hours worked decreased by 5 percent—twice as much as the 2.5 percent fall in gross domestic product. The London *Economist* (20 March) commented on these figures with evident approval: "America has gone on a diet: it has squeezed extra output from a smaller workforce and suffered a big rise in unemployment as a consequence."

This likewise corresponds to Marx's analysis of the basic laws governing the capitalist mode of production. Marx explained that the existence of a large pool of unemployed—the "industrial reserve army"—serves to restrain what he ironically referred to as workers' "pretensions" to demand higher wages:

> "The condemnation of one part of the working-class to enforced idleness by the over-work of the other part, and the converse, becomes a means of enriching the individual capitalists....
>
> "The industrial reserve army, during the periods of stagnation and average prosperity, weighs down the active labour-army; during the periods of overproduction and paroxysm, it holds its pretensions in check. Relative surplus-population is therefore the pivot upon which the law of demand and supply of labour works. It confines the field of action of this law within the limits absolutely convenient to the activity of exploitation and to the domination of capital."
>
> —*Capital*, Volume 1

To make ends meet, working families have increasingly gone into debt, maxing out credit cards and borrowing against the value of their homes. Americans today owe a staggering $13.5 trillion, or around $44,000 for every man, woman and child in the U.S. Any money that families have to spare after providing for essential needs is being spent not on consumption but on trying to ease that crushing debt burden. The average U.S. household today turns over more than 17 percent of its disposable income directly to financial capitalists to pay down mortgages, credit card debt and the like.

The current crisis has been exacerbated by the deindustrialization of the U.S., already under way for several decades. Despite the massive shift of social product from labor to capital, capitalists in this country have steadily ***cut back*** on productive capacity. This country already ranks behind every industrial nation except France in the percentage of overall economic activity devoted to manufacturing—13.9 percent, according to the World Bank, down four percentage points in a decade. Since the official start of the recession in December 2007, some eight million jobs have been lost. Many if not most of those jobs are gone for good, especially in manufacturing.

Those industrial workers who succeed in finding new employment are often forced into low-paying, temporary jobs that provide no health insurance, retirement benefits or even sick days. A cover story titled "The Disposable Worker" in *Bloomberg BusinessWeek* (18 January) reflected the bosses' triumphalism:

> "Some economists predict it will be years, not months, before employees regain any semblance of bargaining power. That's because this recession's unusual ferocity has accelerated trends—including offshoring, automation, the decline of labor unions' influence, new management techniques, and regulatory changes—that already had been eroding workers' economic standing....
>
> "When employment in the U.S. eventually recovers, it's likely to be because American workers swallow hard and accept lower pay."

Standing in sharp contradiction to its declining economic base is U.S. imperialism's overwhelming global military hegemony. The destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92 removed what had been the only significant counterweight to U.S. imperialism, which sees itself free to ride roughshod in Iraq and Afghanistan and to threaten any other regime that gets in its way. Defense of the interests of workers, blacks and immigrants in the U.S. is integrally linked to opposition to U.S. imperialism's interventions abroad.

Weil/Toronto Star

Toronto, June 27: Police in riot gear viciously attack protest against G20 summit.

Toronto: Protest Mass Arrests of G20 Protesters!

We reprint below a June 28 protest statement by the Partisan Defense Committee, a defense organization associated with the Canadian section of the International Communist League.

The Partisan Defense Committee—the legal and social defense organization associated with the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste—denounces in the strongest terms the brutal police violence unleashed on protesters against the G20 summit in Toronto on June 26-27. Over 900 have been arrested, including many protest organizers. We demand the immediate release of all protesters. Drop all the charges now!

Toronto became a virtual police state as 20,000 cops descended on the city. Following a 15,000-strong demonstration against the G20 on June 26, riot police began rounding up protesters and passers-by in indiscriminate sweeps throughout the city core. The cops have employed deadly force, using tear gas, muzzle blast [of tear gas], rubber bullets and pepper spray, and serious injuries have been reported. Journalists have been arrested in a clear effort to prevent exposure of the cop violence.

Those held at the huge temporary detention centre report being denied access to lawyers, water and medical attention. An arrested CTV television producer called the facilities "Guantánamo Bay-style cages." He told of a man denied medical care despite a serious head injury. An activist told *Spartacist Canada* that he was taken to a separate prison, denied access to a lawyer, beaten, strip-searched and forced to kneel with his underwear crammed into his face and mouth. As protesters rallied at the detention centre on Sunday, they too were arrested and force-marched into the prison. A young woman was shot in the face with a rubber bullet. Hundreds of cops raided the offices of the University of Toronto Graduate Students Union and the Toronto Community Mobilization Network [one of the main protest organizers], making many arrests. Meanwhile, anyone wearing black on downtown streets was deemed an anarchist by the cops and subjected to random searches and arrests.

The bosses' media and politicians claim that a few smashed windows and burned-out cop cars justify the brutal crackdown. Reflecting the labour tops' loyalty to the rule of capital, Canadian Labour Congress president Ken Georgetti echoed this, declaring, "We condemn these actions." Jack Layton, leader of the social-democratic New Democratic Party, railed, "The vandalism is criminal and totally unacceptable."

From the standpoint of the working class such actions are no crime! What is a smashed bank window compared to an imperialist system that condemns millions to death by starvation, disease and war? Yet successful struggle against capitalist rule must seek to mobilize the social power of the working class. Rejecting this Marxist perspective, the "direct action" activists with their "black bloc" tactics offer only the sideshow of ineffectual rage, bringing them into isolated conflict with the bloody fist of the bosses' state. It is this racist state apparatus, centrally the cops, courts and army, that maintains the capitalist dictatorship over the working class and oppressed.

Neither pleas for the ruling class to "do right" by the oppressed nor symbolic individual acts will change the system of capitalist exploitation. Only a class-conscious proletariat can put an end to this brutal social system through a socialist revolution that will open the road to an egalitarian communist future. An injury to one is an injury to all! Free all the protesters—Drop the charges!■

Capitalism's Labor Lieutenants

What had already been an enormous increase in the rate of exploitation of workers, due to decades of giveback union contracts, two-tier wage systems and similar devices acceded to by the trade-union bureaucracy, has been further jacked up as a result of the economic crisis. Accepting the logic imposed by the capitalist system, the trade-union tops are reduced to negotiating the terms of surrender, from the union-busting auto bailout to attacks on teachers' tenure and seniority.

Basing themselves on the mass organizations of the working class, the labor bureaucrats are at times pushed to engage in strike action. Yet their primary function is to ensure the subordination of the workers to the interests of the class enemy, especially through their fealty to the Democratic Party, of which they are a constituent part. No less than the Republicans, the Democratic Party is a party of and for the capitalist class—with the difference that the Democrats cynically pose as "friends of labor" and shed crocodile tears over the consequences of the anti-working-class measures that they themselves seek to impose.

Earlier this year, in support of Obama's push for a "financial reform" law, the AFL-CIO tops launched a campaign, featuring an April 29 march by thousands of workers on Wall Street, demanding "Make Wall Street Pay." A couple of weeks later, AFL-CIO president Richard Trumka told a meeting of union officials in Washington: "We can pay for the jobs we need by making Wall Street pay back those bailouts, by taxing those huge Wall Street bonuses, by closing the tax loopholes that benefit hedge fund and private equity managers...and imposing a fee on financial speculation."

However fatuous, such schemes are premised on the notion that the Democratic administration is at bottom the friend of working people and just needs some pressure to rein in the fat cats. Though occasionally engaging in a bit of tough talk about financial regulation, the Obama administration has done—and

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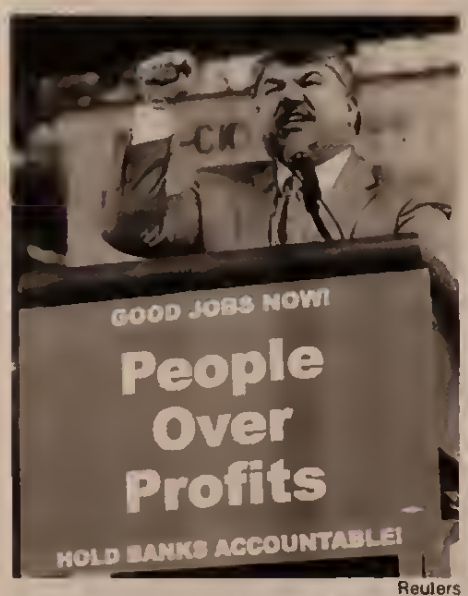
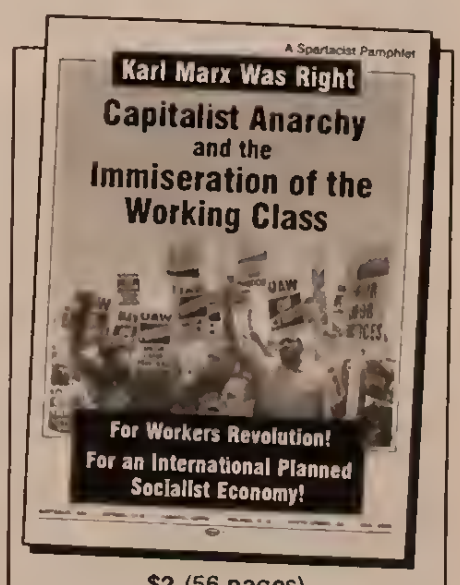


Reuters

WV Photo

Left: AFL-CIO chief Richard Trumka at NYC union rally, April 29. Right: Workers World-led "Ball Out the People Movement" at March 2009 NYC protest. Labor tops, reformists beg capitalist government to "serve the people," not its banker cronies.



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Economy...

(continued from page 5)

will do—little to displease its Wall Street crunies. Avoiding serious restrictions on bankers' pay or their ability to speculate on financial markets makes it more attractive for them to do business on Wall Street rather than in the City of London, the world's other major financial center.

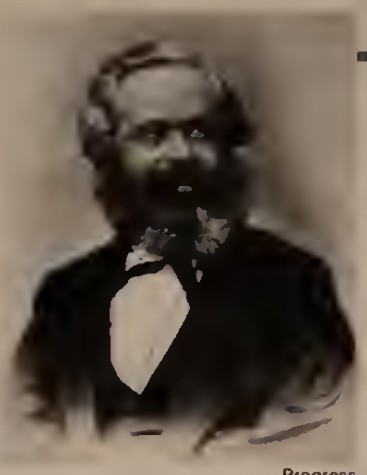
In response to mass layoffs, the pro-capitalist labor officialdom has renewed its chauvinist protectionist appeals. They pushed for and got the "buy American" clause in Obama's "rescue" package for industry last year. Such flag-waving serves only to subordinate workers to their red-white-and-blue exploiters while driving a wedge between native and foreign-burn workers. In the current economic crisis, capitalist governments in the U.S. and elsewhere have ratcheted up attacks on immigrants which, if not fought, will only further divide the working class. It is crucial for the labor movement to organize immigrant workers. We demand: No deportations! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

Along with liberal Democrats like New York Senator Charles Schumer, the union misleaders have been in the forefront of protectionism directed against China. In this vein, Trumka & Co. clamor against the Stalinist Communist Party regime for not revaluing its currency, the yuan (also called renminbi), upwards, claiming that its current value against the dollar undermines American exports and hence costs jobs at home.

Anti-China protectionism is directed against the bureaucratically deformed workers state that issued out of the 1949 Chinese Revolution. That revolution was a historic achievement for China's workers and peasants and for the workers of the world, smashing capitalist/landlord rule and ripping the world's most populous country out of the hands of the imperialist powers. Despite the rule of a privileged, nationalist bureaucracy, China's collectivized economy has brought enormous gains to generations of workers, peasants and women. While capitalist property has made huge inroads over the last three decades of "market reforms," nationalized property remains the core of the economy. The U.S. and other imperialist powers seek nothing less than the restoration of capitalist rule in China. The treacherous AFL-CIO misleaders aid the imperialists by their promotion of "dissidents" like Han Dongfang, who seeks to channel Chinese workers' struggles in the direction of support to capitalist counterrevolution.

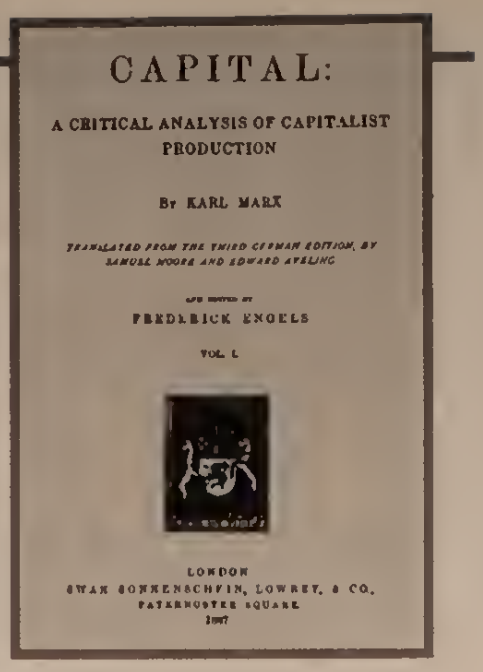
It is vital for the international proletariat to stand for the unconditional military defense of China and the other remaining deformed workers states—Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam—against imperialist and domestic counterrevolution. It is the task of the proletariat of those countries to carry out a political revolution to sweep out their nationalist Stalinist misrulers, who preach accommodation with the world capitalist order, and establish regimes based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

There has recently been an explosion of strikes by Chinese workers in foreign-owned plants like Honda and Toyota (see article, page 16). While the U.S. labor tops have been prostrate before the bosses' attacks, the workers in the capitalist plants in China are winning gains the tried-and-true way—through class struggle! These strikes underline the need for international labor solidarity in opposition to the U.S. trade-union tops' poisonous protectionist schemes, which divide workers along national lines.



Progress

Karl Marx was right. In his seminal work, Marx demonstrated fundamental irrationality of capitalist system.



EPA

October 2008: Henry Paulson, Ben Bernanke and Timothy Geithner lay out economic recovery plan under Bush.

Tea Party Reactionaries

The labor bureaucracy dutifully threw an enormous amount of union resources—money and time—into getting Obama placed in office as U.S. capitalism's CEO. Liberal-minded workers and intellectuals expected major reforms, from universal health insurance coverage to tighter financial regulation. These expectations were reinforced by the severity of the economic crisis and the upsurge of popular hostility toward Wall Street. The reformist left—the International Socialist Organization, Workers World Party et al.—hailed Obama's election as evidence that their program of pressuring the Democratic Party could fundamentally improve conditions for workers, blacks and immigrants. Combating such illusions, we described Obama as a "Wall Street Democrat" and wrote right after the elections: "Obama seeks to socialize the bourgeoisie's losses on the backs of working people, while helping the exploiters appropriate the profits for themselves" (*WV* No. 925, 21 November 2008).

And this is precisely what has happened. With the labor movement largely prostrate, organized opposition to the Obama administration's policies has come primarily from the far-right wing. Racist yahoos, bible-thumpers, militiamen, John Birch Society types and "birthers" (who challenge the fact that Obama was born in the U.S.)—along with a fringe of fascist white-supremacists—were mobilized by the Republican right and their media shock jocks into a loose "Tea Party" movement in opposition initially to the economic stimulus package and then the health care "reform." But at bottom it was not about particular policy issues. This movement displays the anti-black racism, anti-immigrant nativism and sexual bigotry that have long heen wielded by the American bourgeoisie to divide the working class and buttress social reaction.

On March 20, shortly before the Congressional vote on Obama's health care bill, Tea Party protesters outside the U.S. Capitol yelled the "N" word at civil rights veteran John Lewis and other black Congressmen and spat on another; they confronted openly gay Congressman Barney Frank with homophobic slurs. And no sooner had Tea Party candidate Rand Paul won Kentucky's May 18 Republican Party Senate primary than he declared that he would have opposed forcing private businesses to desegregate under the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

While partly a response to the current economic downturn, today's Tea Party movement has roots going back to the white racist backlash against the limited gains for blacks and women, crucially including abortion rights, that resulted from the civil rights movement and other social upheavals of the 1960s. That backlash eventually took the form of opposition to "big government"—identified with court-ordered racial integration in the public schools, giving jobs to blacks and women under affirmative action programs and handing out welfare money to poor black women and their children (a demagogic lie since relatively few government funds went to the poor, black or white). This boiled over into the "tax revolt" of the late 1970s—the so-called revenge of the suburbs—which propelled Ronald Reagan into the White House and began the ascendancy of the Republican right in national politics.

It's the Capitalist System, Not Personal Greed

At the AFL-CIO's April 29 Wall Street demonstration, Trumka sought to appeal to workers' justifiable outrage by denouncing the bankers' "spirit of greed." In fact, blaming the global economic downturn on the unbridled greed of a small number of financiers serves to *divert* attention from the destructive irrationality of the profit-driven capitalist system as a whole.

As Karl Marx explained, what drives the capitalist system up and down is the rate of profit: the amount of surplus value extracted from the exploitation of labor per unit of capital invested. The policies and actions of corporate management—whether of banks, industrial enterprises or retail chains—aim to maximize the return on equity—the ratio of profits to the market value of the firm's stock.

The role of management is that of agents of the big capitalist shareholders in their corporations. If the return on equity of a given corporation declines or is substantially less than that of its main competitors, the price of its stock will fall. And woe unto management when that happens. *The Sellout* (2009), a book on the financial meltdown by financial journalist and TV commentator Charles Gasparino, is subtitled: *How Three Decades of Wall Street Greed and Government Mismanagement Destroyed the Global Financial System*. Gasparino peddles the notion that excessive greed helped cause the current crisis by leading investment bankers to take unsound risks. But Gasparino himself recounts that some CEOs of major investment banks, such as E. Stanley O'Neal at Merrill Lynch and John Mack at Morgan Stanley, were known for shying away from excessive risk before they took over the top job. They then became obsessed with increasing the bank's return on equity. The only way they could do that given the economic environment at the time was to invest ever greater sums in mortgage-backed securities, including arcane derivatives, while amassing ever greater amounts of debt relative to the bank's capital.

Some Wall Street executives recognized to some extent that they were in the midst of a speculative bubble but felt compelled to participate in it lest they lose out to the competition. As then-Citigroup CEO Charles Prince put it in mid 2007: "When the music stops, in terms of liquidity, things will be complicated. But as long as the music is playing, you've got to get up and dance. We're still dancing." And when the music did stop, the government bailed out Prince and his Wall Street cohorts.

"Socialism for the Rich": Wall Street Bailout Revisited

A case study of how the government serves as the executive committee of the capitalist ruling class is offered by the massive bailout of the big banks and other major financial players. The story of that bailout was detailed in two books that came out last year, both written by well-informed financial journalists: David Wessel's *In Fed We Trust: Ben Bernanke's War on the Great Panic* and Andrew Ross Sorkin's *Too Big To Fail: The Inside Story of How Wall Street and Washington Fought to Save the Financial System from Crisis—and Themselves*. Wessel is the economics editor of the *Wall Street Journal* and Sorkin is a mainstay of the business section of the *New York Times*.

Both books recount that the Bush administration collaborated closely with top Democratic as well as Republican

continued on page 13

Reuters

Madrid, June 8: Public sector workers protest government austerity plan. Banner reads: "No to the Cutbacks."

Boron...

(continued from page 3)

bringing the strength of the ILWU to bear in defense of the Boron miners, the ILWU bureaucrats blocked the mobilization of union power. The bureaucrats set up one section of the union to undermine another. Local 20 members processed scab borax at Rio Tinto's privately owned processing terminal on the docks in Wilmington, California. Local 13 longshoremen at Los Angeles-area docks, and perhaps other ILWU locals, shipped scab Boron products, although the longshoremen were not informed that containers of scab borax were moving through the port. This will indeed have "massive implications," particularly for the ILWU.

Next in line for the Rio Tinto bosses are members of Local 20, whose contract is up next year. These workers continued to process scab borax throughout the Boron lockout, but this was not for want of solidarity. As we wrote in "ILWU: Don't Handle Scab Borax!" (*WV* No. 956, 9 April): "These ILWU members have been kept on the job by the union misleaders who bow in homage to the bosses' laws banning hot-cargoing and other 'illegal' labor actions."

If the ILWU tops were serious about struggle, they would have at least negotiated common contract expiration dates for Locals 20 and 30, which face the same employer. Instead, the contract settlement with Rio Tinto at Boron in 2004, which cut health benefits by 20 percent, set a pattern for the same cuts in the Local 20 contract two years later. Allowing the bosses to pick off the smaller ILWU locals sets the stage for the port employers of the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) to go after the key longshore and clerks divisions when their contract comes up in 2014. That the ILWU's largest local, L.A./Long Beach Local 13, shipped containers of scab borax throughout the lockout will not be lost on the PMA in assessing the fighting capacity of the ILWU.

The Real Lessons of the Boron Lockout

An article in the same issue of the *Dispatcher*, "Lessons of the Lockout," points to the tens of thousands of dollars in food and money that was raised for the Boron workers from the ILWU and other unions. The "Docks to the Desert" food caravan, organized by integrated unions from the L.A. region in the early days of the lockout, overawed this tiny Mojave Desert mining town. But real solidarity is more than a charity drive. The workers' power lies in their numbers, solidarity, and above all their ability to shut down production. While trucks of food rolled into town, Boron workers counted the trucks with containers of scab borax rolling out of the mine. These containers, reportedly in the thousands, went to L.A.-area ports. More scab product was shipped by rail to non-union docks on the Gulf of Mexico, particularly Houston, according to ILWU workers.

ILWU International organizing director Peter Olney told *Labor Notes* (4 June) that the reason Rio Tinto was "able to hang on is the inventory they built up before the lockout." In other words, the company was only able to keep the miners locked out for over three months because the ILWU itself kept shipments of this stockpiled inventory moving! Olney himself points out that a central reason for Rio Tinto even coming back to the bargaining table was that production by the outfit of scabs the company had hired was at a mere 35 percent—i.e., inventory was running out. But as a May 14 leaflet put out by left-talking ILWU bureaucrat Jack Heyman and others reported, the ILWU tops blocked Boron miners and other union members who wanted to set up pickets at the L.A. dock to stop these shipments.

A motion authored by Heyman calling on transport workers to refuse to handle scab cargo from Boron was passed in the union's Bay Area Local 10. A similar motion was passed in the Portland local.

Getty

WV Photo

Left: ILWU members picket Rio Tinto borax mine at onset of Boron lockout, February 2. Right: Scab borax was processed at ILWU-organized Rio Tinto plant in Wilmington, CA.

Yet when this motion was put forward by a Portland delegate at an early April meeting of the Coast Caucus of the ILWU's longshore division, the assembled bureaucrats resoundingly voted it down. Instead, a standing ovation was reportedly given to the ILWU leadership for its "public relations" strategy, which was based on portraying the Boron miners as helpless victims of a "British-owned" company. This line was carried out in American flag-waving protests against Rio Tinto at British consulates around the world and at a Rio Tinto shareholders meeting.

In the early days of the lockout, workers from South Africa, Turkey and Australia who themselves have engaged in struggle against Rio Tinto's rapacious union-busting sent delegates to Boron to show their solidarity. But the potential for real international working-class solidarity was undermined by the red-white-and-blue patriotism promoted by the ILWU misleaders. Instead of appealing to transport workers internationally to refuse to handle scab borax, the bureaucrats portrayed the fight against Rio Tinto not as a fight of the working class against its capitalist class enemies but as a defense of America against a "foreign-owned company." Such chauvinism is nothing more than an alibi for America's imperialist rulers, who are second to none in subjugating the workers and oppressed in the U.S. and internationally to their drive for profit and world domination—from the murderous occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq to the racist cop terror meted out to blacks and immigrants at home.

The ILWU tops promote their "relationships with politicians who are willing to stand up for working families" (*Dispatcher*, April/May 2010). This encapsulates a fundamental lesson of the Boron lockout: the role that the labor bureaucracy plays in subordinating the interests of the workers to the interests of U.S. capitalism, particularly as represented by the Democratic Party. So strong are the bureaucrats' ties to the capitalist order that they renounce the class-struggle means through which the unions were built in favor of "corporate campaigns" based on winning the "hearts and minds" of the capitalist media, corporate shareholders and bourgeois politicians.

For a Class-Struggle Leadership!

Heyman presents the current International leadership as trampling on the union's "militant history of organizing mass pickets on the docks" (see Heyman's "Bad Strategy in the Boron Strike," *Socialist Worker*, 27 May). The union's founder and longtime leader, Harry Bridges, is often invoked as the exemplar of this tradition. However, it was none other than Bridges himself, as ILWU International president, who stabbed the Boron miners in the back during their 1974 strike, at the cost of 400 jobs. As the "Longshore-Warehouse Militant," published by a class-struggle opposition in the ILWU which was supported by *Workers Vanguard*, stated following this defeat:

> "At Boron the International allowed a militant local to be defeated by company scabherding. The International allowed things to degenerate so far that Local 20A [now Local 20] went back to work processing scab Boron products while Boron Local 30 was still striking. The International then refused to authorize the longshore division to stop scab borax shipments. Boron was a landmark defeat for our union and Fortune magazine, December 1974, has written the strike up as a management manual for future strikebreaking."

Dispatcher

October 2009: Workers at International Maritime Conference in New Zealand express support for Boron miners in lead-up to lockout.

For all of Heyman's talk about the need for labor action by the ILWU and transport workers internationally to defend the Boron miners this time around, he never challenged the policies of the bureaucracy that undermined such action head-on. Instead of fighting the ILWU International's grotesque patriotism, which is counterposed to international labor solidarity, in an April 15 leaflet he merely declared that "flag-waving will not win this battle." Similarly, in the May 14 leaflet Heyman described the bureaucrats' "corporate campaign" simply as a "failed strategy." But this strategy was born of the bureaucracy's pro-capitalist worldview, which must be fought if the unions are to actually struggle against their exploiters. Instead, the likes of Heyman provide a more "militant" gloss for the class-collaborationist policies of the ILWU bureaucracy of which he is an integral part.

The defense of the livelihoods of the workers against powerful corporations like Rio Tinto is no easy task, particularly in the midst of an economic crisis with millions of jobless. Any real fight is going to come up against the full arsenal of the ruling class, from anti-strike propaganda to naked repression by the courts and cops. To revive the fighting strength of the unions and to bring the mass of unorganized workers into their ranks will take a hard fight against the capitalist class enemy. In the course of this fight must emerge a new labor leadership based on a program of class struggle.

There are real lessons to be drawn from the Boron lockout. First among these is that if the working class is to struggle in its own interests it must be mobilized independent of all the political parties, state and other agencies of the capitalist class enemy. Equally important is the understanding that the workers' fight is international, based on active solidarity with their class brothers and sisters around the world against the increasing depredations of capitalist imperialism. This needs a political expression: the forging of an internationalist multiracial workers party, whose purpose is to link the struggles to improve the present conditions of the workers and oppressed with the revolutionary aim of sweeping away the entire system of capitalist wage slavery in which their exploitation and oppression are rooted. ■

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Italy: Unions Must Defend and Organize Immigrant Workers!

We print below an article translated from Spartaco *No. 72 (March 2010), newspaper of the Lega Trotskista d'Italia, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). The term* caporali *refers to people operating the* caporalato, *a mob-run system of exploiting immigrant labor in conditions of virtual slavery. The* 'ndrangheta *is a powerful crime syndicate based in southern Italy.*

SPARTACO

EPA

Above: Immigrants in southern Italian town of Rosarno protest living conditions and racist attacks, January 8. Below: Immigrant workers from Rosarno being rounded up and sent to deportation centers.

RAI

In early January, the town of Rosarno, located in one of the main agricultural areas of Calabria, was the scene of a bloody manhunt against dozens of farm workers of African origin. Racist gangs, armed and instigated by the *caporali*, wounded the immigrant workers with clubs and gunshots. The racist violence exploded after several hundred farm workers, fed up with the violence of the local landowners' *caporali* and the *'ndrangheta* mobsters' hired hit men, courageously protested in the town streets, overturning cars and garbage cans and clashing with cops in riot gear. Approximately 2,000 immigrants later demonstrated in front of city hall with placards reading "We Are People, Not Animals" and "Italians Are Racists."

While the government takes the lead in inciting lynching, with Maroni, the Northern League [a racist, far-right party] Minister of the Interior, going so far as to denounce "excessive tolerance toward foreigners" while the newspaper of the family of [Prime Minister Silvio] Berlusconi (*Il Giornale*) encouraged lynching with the headline, "Shoot the Mafia Instead of the N-----s"). Meanwhile, the police intervened to stamp out the workers' protests, leaving the bosses' armed thugs to carry on without interference for almost two days. The racist terror against the immigrant farm workers ended in a variant of "ethnic cleansing," entirely to the benefit of the bloodsucking capitalists.

As soon as the orange harvest was finished and the bosses no longer needed labor, the police "evacuated" some 100,000 workers, locking them up in hundreds of Centers for Identification and Expulsion (CIE). From there, the workers were deported. Those with residence permits were dispersed to various cities, without a job or a roof over their heads. Many of them also lost the miserable wages they had spilled their blood and sweat for, under the heel of the *caporali*. (Calling on the cops to arrest and deport undocumented immigrant workers is a timeworn practice in the fields of southern Italy.) We demand: ***Free all the arrested immigrants now! No deportations! Shut down the Centers for Identification and Expulsion now!*** We fight for ***full citizenship rights for all those who live in this country***—an elementary democratic demand for complete equality for all, not merely the right to a residence permit and a vote in local elections, which is the most that the reformist left is willing to concede.

The Unions Must Defend Immigrants

In the face of mass racist violence such as occurred in Rosarno, it is essential to mobilize the social power of the unions. The workers movement must not permit one of its most isolated and vulnerable sections to face racist gang violence by themselves. The unions must confront the racist violence of Rosarno by organizing protest actions and strikes. They should have sent dozens of busloads of workers to put an end to the racist riots. Workers' self-defense guards, made up of immigrants and Italians, would have been indicated.

Even if this may be difficult in the present reactionary political climate, it is necessary to learn from the traditions of solidarity and class struggle that built the unions in this country. After the police massacre of Calabrese farm workers in Melissa in October 1949, there were protest strikes in all the major plants in the North, and workers from the OM truck factory in Brescia and from Turin drove back the police attacks. In 1972, the CGIL [General Confederation of Italian Workers] organized special trains to bring more than 40,000 workers to Reggio Calabria, where they braved eight dynamite attacks and held an impressive demonstration against the fascist-led riots in which a number of leftist militants had been killed.

By contrast, in Rosarno the union bureaucrats acted as auxiliaries of the police repression. The secretary of the Calabria CGIL wrote an open letter to Maroni and public institutions demanding a police intervention, allegedly to protect the immigrants, and "a guarantee that a sufficient number of police will be maintained in Rosarno and the surrounding area to ensure adequate control of the town" and to "designate 'welcome centers' where immigrants' who are living in Rosarno in intolerable conditions that 'destroy human dignity' would be brought together." In this situation, the intervention of the repressive apparatus of the state necessarily augments racist oppression and mass deportations to the CIE's horrendous ethnic jails!

The pro-capitalist bureaucrats currently running the unions do not base themselves on the perspective of class struggle, but collaborate with the bosses to enable them to compete with their foreign rivals, hoping to obtain in return a few crumbs from their profits. Thus in Rosarno, CGIL secretary Epifani called for an improvement in the farm workers' conditions "through a commitment by the employers' associations and all national and local institutions, with an appropriate plan to provide the labor the agricultural industry needs and an obligation to normalize labor relations and respect national wage contracts." To make an appeal to the "employers' associations" and the capitalist "institutions," in other words to the class of bloodsuckers who live off the workers' labor, to improve conditions for immigrant farm workers serves only to deceive the workers and send the capitalists a clear signal that the union tops are willing to collaborate to fulfill "the need for manpower."

For their part, the reformist left's only perspective is to give capitalism a more human face. Thus the editor in chief of *Liberazione*, Dino Greco, lamented the absence of state forces in Rosarno, demanding "that the state ally with the migrants to promote a policy of integration and shared citizenship." The capitalist state was only too present in Rosarno as a repressive force against the agricultural workers. The police, the courts and the army are the core of the capitalist state, which is an instrument for the defense of private property and the power of the ruling capitalist class. Every strike, every important struggle inevitably confronts this armed force of the ruling class. One need only recall how the police attacked the Innse workers [strikers at a metallurgical plant] last summer or, more recently, attacked immigrant workers at the Fiege and GLS plants in Lombardy and FMA-Fiat workers in Pratola Serra.

On the basis of racist laws passed during the past few decades by right-wing governments and by the Unione and the Olive Tree and Rifondazione Comunista coalition governments, the cops and courts persecute, imprison or deport hundreds of immigrants every day, accompanied by beatings and abuse. ***No illusions in the capitalist courts! Cops out of the unions!*** As the Russian revolutionary V. I. Lenin wrote:

> "The basic rule, the first commandment, of any trade union movement is not to rely on the 'state' but to rely only on the ***strength of one's own class***. The state is an organization of the ruling class. Don't rely on promises. Rely only on the strength of the unity and political consciousness of your class!"
>
> —"The Need for an Agricultural Laborers' Union in Russia," June 1917

Unlike Lenin, the Partito Comunista dei Lavoratori (PCL—Communist Workers Party) wants to use the organized working class not to overthrow the bourgeois state but to aid the work of the police. In Milan, after the killing of an Egyptian immigrant in a brawl, the police laid siege—colonial style—to the multiethnic district of Viale Padova, with armored police vans on every corner. Salvini of the Northern League demanded that the immigrants be mopped up with

AFP

January 10: Authorities bulldoze immigrant encampments outside Rosarno.

"checkpoints and expulsions, house by house, floor by floor." The only response from the PCL was that vigilante squads should be organized against "crime":

> "We call for a cleanup too. But not the cleanup by police and right-wing squads against the migrants that Salvini (Northern League) would like. Instead, organized action of mixed groups of Italian and migrant workers against criminality in neighborhoods of any color. Against dealers in hard drugs, Italian or 'foreign.' But also against the criminality of the property owners...agains' the criminality of the oh-so-Italian moneylenders who act as loan sharks against small neighborhood shopkeepers, especially immigrants; against the criminality of the underworld, Italian and 'foreign,' which extorts protection money from neighborhood businesses. And finally, of course, against the provocations and aggression of bands of racists or communal gangs, which harm both migrant and Italian workers."
>
> —*pclavoratori.it*, 17 February

In practice, the PCL offers their own services to the ruling class to impose bourgeois "legality" in the immigrant districts. We oppose organizations of this type, which would be nothing but auxiliaries to the racist police and would encourage the hysteria of the "patrols" even more. The PCL also tails the "war on drugs," the battle cry of all the reactionary forces targeting immigrants and the left. Communists fight for the decriminalization of the use and sale of *all* narcotic substances.

For Unionization of All Immigrant Workers!

The explosion in Rosarno threw a spotlight on the conditions of more than 50,000 immigrant agricultural workers who move according to the needs of the harvest, forming the backbone of entire agricultural sectors, in the South and in the North. The inhuman conditions in which they live were described by Fabrizio Gatti in *L'Espresso* ("I Was a Slave in Puglia," 1 September 2006):

> "To protect their business, the growers and landowners have cultivated a network of ruthless *caporali:* Italians, Arabs, Eastern Europeans. They house their farm workers in unsafe hovels, where not even stray dogs will sleep anymore. Without water, light or toilets. They make them work from six in the morning until ten at night. And they are paid—if they are paid at all—15 or 20 euros a day. Anyone who protests gets hit with an iron bar to shut them up. Someone went for help to the police station at Foggia. And then discovered the law that [right-wing politicians] Umberto Bossi and Gianfranco Fini wanted: he was arrested and deported because his work permit was not in order. Others ran away. The *caporali* searched for them all night long. Just like the manhunt recounted by Alan Parker in the film *Mississippi Burning*. In the end someone was caught. Someone else was killed."

These conditions are not caused by the fact that the South is under the control of Mafia organizations, or that there is a particularly racist right-wing government at the helm of the capitalist state, as the reformist left would like you to believe. Conditions like this exist in entire industrial sectors of this country. Indeed, they can be found all over the world, everywhere the bourgeoisie imports vulnerable, low-cost labor and succeeds in dividing the proletariat along ethnic and national lines, as has been seen in the repeated revolts of immigrants and the racist violence in Andalusia, Spain. The brutal exploitation that immigrant farm workers endure is a poisonous fruit of the capitalist profit system: a system in which the bosses of a whole branch of industry (from the *caporali* to the lords of agribusiness, the food industry, information technology, marketing, finance) divide up the profits derived from the workers' labor and constantly try to raise the rate of exploitation to compete on the market.

The *caporalato* system and superexploitation are certainly not limited to agriculture. Recently the transport workers' section of the CUB trade-union federation denounced the fact that there are thousands of immigrant workers at Milan's Malpensa airport working under *caporalato* conditions—and this is but one example. It is essential that the unions launch a campaign to unionize ***all immigrant workers and all non-unionized workers in general.*** These workers represent the weakest and most vulnerable sector of the proletariat. It is necessary to fight so that all workers, Italian and immigrant, legal and "clandestine," under contract or working "off the books," are guaranteed ***equal pay for equal work*** and union protection based on the best contractual conditions.

In *caporalato* country as well as on building sites and in warehouses throughout Lombardy, just as in the "cooperatives" of Emilia Romagna, this will require a hard struggle of ***class against class*** with strikes, flying pickets and solid mobilizations. It was thanks to hard and sometimes bloody struggles that generations of farm workers and poor peasants in the South wrested better living conditions from the *latifundistas* and growers, the grandfathers of today's lords of the food and agriculture industry.

Getty

Umberto Bossi (shown at left of inset with Prime Minister Berlusconi) heads right-wing Northern League, which is at forefront of anti-immigration racist reaction in Italy. Left: Northern League election posters, Milano.

Reuters

As the investigation by *L'Espresso* (1 September 2006) noted, one of the areas where exploitation and racist oppression are the most brutal is "a lawless triangle which covers almost the entire province of Foggia. From Cerignola to Candela and above, further to the north, as far as San Severo. And in Nichi Vendola's progressive region." [Nichi Vendola is a former Rifondazione Comunista leader, now head of Sinistra Ecologia Libertà (Left Ecology Freedom).] In reality, the fact that the person running the Puglia plantation in the capacity of "governor" is the leader of Sinistra Ecologia Libertà hasn't changed the wage slavery of immigrant agricultural workers one iota. It has only served to chain the workers to the bosses, reinforcing illusions in the possibility of capitalism "with a human face."

Bourgeois ideologues, particularly those like journalist Roberto Saviano in the "fight the Mafia" chorus, which is so much in vogue on the reformist left, try to blame the power of the local Mafia for the brutal exploitation of immigrant farm workers. They keep themselves busy appealing to the repressive institutions of the capitalist state (police, courts) to intervene to impose "legality." But Mafia, *camorra* crime syndicates or *'ndrangheta* are particular components of the capitalist class, originating under the stifling conditions of the belated capitalist development of southern Italy. Capitalists, wherever they are located, whether "honest" or "criminal," live off the exploitation of workers' labor. They don't need the *'ndrangheta* to subject workers to brutal exploitation, as the cooperatives of the North or the sweatshops of America remind us. And the bosses don't always need *caporalis* from the *'ndrangheta* to suppress those who revolt: when the police or private guards don't show up, they have always found a reservoir of anti-working-class forces when their profits and property are at risk.

The capitalist state, which wants to keep the monopoly of organized violence in order to maintain the bourgeois status quo, does not really like the existence of armed bands that escape its control. But in decisive moments of the class struggle, the Mafia was a tool for the bourgeoisie in the bloody repression of land occupations in Sicily after World War II, and thus became an integral part of Italian capitalist rule. Among the services the Mafia "offers" to businessmen who accept its "protection" in exchange for a cut is certainly the guarantee that it will stifle any attempt whatsoever to organize unions. In 1989, Jerry Maslo, a South African immigrant fleeing apartheid, was murdered by the *camorra* for trying to unionize immigrant farm workers in Campania.

Gabriele del Grande, La Repubblica (inset)

Above: Immigrants in Milano being sent in armored buses to Centers for Identification and Expulsion prison hellholes. Top: CIE facility in Rome.

The conflict between the Mafia and the state (insofar as they oppose each other) reflects a conflict within the bourgeoisie for distribution of the profits derived from the exploitation of workers' labor. The problem is not to replace "dishonest" exploiters with others who claim to be honest, but to get rid of the entire system of capitalist exploitation, expropriating the land and factories from the bosses and running them in a collectivized and centralized way under a government of workers power.

Class Struggle and the Oppression of Immigrants

The capitalist crisis of the past two years has brought poverty and devastation to the lives of millions of workers around the world. In Italy alone, in less than two years more than 600,000 people have lost their jobs, not to speak of the thousands who were working off the books, who are officially excluded from the statistics. The list of factories laying off workers or closing down is getting longer every day, and some hard struggles are being waged to prevent whole branches of industry from being dismantled. These are often the last proletarian concentrations in entire regions of the South, such as Fiat in Termini Imerese or Alcoa in Portovesme. Six out of the 12 European regions with the highest rate of youth unemployment (greater than 30 percent) are in southern Italy.

In the face of this carnage, what is needed is a massive mobilization of the working class, with strikes that go beyond

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Fotobank

Agricultural laborers in Calabria.

Italy...

(continued from page 9)

the plants in crisis and demand the distribution of all work among everyone able to work, with no reduction in wages. With the workers facing this crisis and the burden of poverty and layoffs, the capitalists seek to further divide them along ethnic and national lines to prevent them from fighting together against the real cause of their suffering, the capitalist profit system. But there are no trade-union solutions to the cyclical crises of capitalism. In the face of mass unemployment, two tendencies develop among workers. One is the reactionary, losing one of competing with each other to sell the only property they have—their labor power. This is the road, often supported by the reformist left, of nationalist protectionism, which calls for defending "Italian jobs" at the expense of workers in other countries, or racism against immigrants accused of "stealing jobs from Italians." This road leads to lining the workers up with their compatriot exploiters, undermining the solidarity of the working class and worsening conditions for all.

The other road is that of uniting in class struggle against the capitalist bosses, based not on what's possible from the standpoint of profits for the industrialists and their banks, but on what is *indispensable* for the proletariat: a job and a decent wage for all, new homes, new streets, new factories, free quality education and health care. If capitalism is not capable of guaranteeing what the masses of workers need, then it must be overthrown by a proletarian revolution and replaced with a planned economy on an international scale. But to be able to take this second road, the working class needs a revolutionary party, based on the internationalist program of Leninism and Trotskyism. ***The interests of workers and immigrants go forward together or they will be defeated separately.***

The special oppression of the immigrant population—or those of immigrant origin, given the growing presence of a generation of youth born in Italy, whom the bourgeoisie refuses to consider Italians and would like to ghettoize from kindergarten onwards—goes well beyond economic exploitation.

Immigrant workers employed in small and tiny businesses, often working without a contract or union protection, have paid a very high price for the crisis and were the first to be thrown onto the streets. Since the racist Bossi-Fini law links a residence permit to a work contract and a minimum income, poverty and unemployment for immigrants also means the risk of arrest and deportation. Racist discrimination is encountered in every corner of society, with mayors and governors competing to ban phone centers, mosques and kebab cafés. In Milan, the city council and the ATM public transport company are jointly organizing dragnets on buses, during which immigrants' documents are taken away and they are locked in vans with barred windows and taken to the CIE. In the province of Brescia, the Northern League administration launched operation "White Christmas" to cleanse the area of "illegal" immigrants before Christmas.

Getty

February 2009: Fiat auto workers from Pomigliano d'Arco plant near Naples face off against cops during protest.

On top of this is the pervasive legal violence of the state, symbolized by the ethnic CIE prison hellholes, as well as police violence and abuse. Encouraged by the continuing racist campaigns and laws, carried out by the current Berlusconi government and by the previous governments of Unione and Rifondazione, extralegal violence is also on the rise, carried out by gangs of fascist thugs who target immigrants, Roma [Gypsies] and homosexuals.

We support and in fact emphatically demand that the unions organize militant actions and strikes *by the whole working class* in defense of immigrant rights and against every manifestation of racist oppression. Strikes of this kind would be powerful actions whose value would be anything but symbolic.

Under the umbrella of the "First of March Association" (and using the sham "political neutrality" of the color yellow, historically the color of the Vatican and scabs), a coalition of bit players from the Democratic Party (PD), the ARCI [a cultural and recreational organization linked to the PD] and the Catholic church proclaimed a "day without immigrants"—a horrible name that could also please the Northern League. The organizers' aim was "a large nonviolent demonstration to broaden public opinion by showing how indispensable immigration is for our society and how defending rights is key to upholding democracy" (*primomarzo2010.it*, 10 January).

The message the organizers of the First of March Association want to send to capitalist public opinion is this: our (capitalist) economy needs immigrant manpower, and if you want to keep exploiting it to your advantage without provoking social explosions, you have to make some concessions. The bourgeoisie is divided over what immigration policy to adopt. On one side are the racist ideologues who call for segregation, roundups and deportations. On the other there is a political spectrum ranging from the reformist left (Rifondazione & Co.) to the Democratic Party and all the way over to the Catholic church. Aware that whole sectors of industry depend on the availability of cheap immigrant labor, they are open to a limited extension of immigrant rights and they want to keep racist excesses in check. For example, they are open to a more rational system for residence permits or giving "legal" immigrants a vote in local elections.

It was not to the working class but to this sector of the bourgeoisie that the Democratic Party and Rifondazione, and those that tail them, oriented with their "day without immigrants," exploiting as usual the fairy tale of anti-racism in the final days of campaigning for the regional elections at the end of March. Proof of this is the fact that Livia Turco was among the first and most prominent supporters of the First of March Association. Turco was the author of the racist laws that created the Centers of Temporary Residence [CPT, precursor of the CIE] and approved tens of thousands of deportations.

The political practices and program put forward by the organizers of the "day without immigrants" are antithetical to the idea of a class-struggle mobilization in defense of immigrants and are bound to perpetuate the oppression of immigrants. Nevertheless, the burning need for a social mobilization in defense of their rights drew a lot of support from a large sector of immigrants who perceive that they have some weight and growing social power and are tired of being victims of one-sided racist attacks.

Instead of giving an organized class expression of immigrant workers' anger and willingness to struggle, the union bureaucracy was against calling a strike, even if only to provide union cover to the "day without immigrants." Exceptions were the CUB health workers and a few "rank-and-file" local unions in companies where the majority of workers are immigrants. Petro Soldini, the CGIL leader responsible for immigrants, refused to call a strike, arguing that this could "boomerang." Instead he proposed "a consumer strike and logos people could wear to an event organized on a Saturday when most people are already not working" (*L'Espresso*, 21 January).

Without a serious mobilization of the unions, a "strike of immigrants" could only be a show of weakness and a confused mess because many immigrant workers would feel they had to work in any event, and those with enough class consciousness to strike would risk losing their jobs. And even if it had the support of the unions, a strike limited to immigrant workers would be nothing but a mirror image of a racist mentality like that of the Northern League, according to which "Italian" workers would never mobilize in defense of immigrants, and the only people willing to do so would be immigrants themselves plus some philanthropists in the editorial offices of newspapers and in the parishes. We communists base ourselves on the principle of working-class unity in the unions: ***one out, all out!***

Bitter Fruits of Class Collaboration

For the unions to be able to fight effectively in the interests of immigrants and the poor, they need a class-struggle leadership forged in political struggle against the current sellouts at the head of the main union organizations. If they don't support the government directly, the current leaders are often linked to the Democratic Party or to Rifondazione Comunista, as is the case with leaders of the FIOM metalworkers union and many "rank-and-file" unions. This struggle in turn requires building a revolutionary party forged in opposition to the class-collaborationist politics shared by the various reformist left organizations.

Today the Democratic Party and Rifondazione Comunista shed crocodile tears over the suffering of immigrants. But when Prodi's Olive Tree coalition—a capitalist popular-front government, i.e., a coalition of parties of the bourgeoisie supported by reformist workers parties like Rifondazione Comunista—was in government in 1997, it was they themselves who approved racist laws such as the notorious Turco-Napolitano law that introduced the Centers of Temporary Residence. When they returned to government in 2006, Unione and Rifondazione did nothing to abolish the racist Bossi-Fini law linking the residence permit to a work contract. Quite the contrary. On 31 October 2007, one of the last actions of the Prodi government was to pass a law (with the direct vote of Ferrero, secretary of Rifondazione and a government minister) which established numerous racist policies against Roma and Romanians, including deportations and razing of their encampments. This law made the Bossi-Fini law even worse and paved the way for the Berlusconi government's subsequent security package that in 2009 introduced the crime of "clandestinity"!

La Sicilia

Leftist workers leader Accursio Miraglia, one of many killed by Mafia in collusion with Italian bourgeoisie in post-World War II period.

The "alternative policy" on immigration put forward by the Democratic Party and Rifondazione rejects the racist "excesses" of the Northern League and its friends, but its fundamental aim is to guarantee that a spigot of vulnerable, low-cost immigrant labor remains firmly in the hands of the capitalist state and is used to satisfy the needs of the Italian capitalists. In fact, after the aggression in Rosarno, the PD accused the government of not having "put the brakes on illegal immigration at all, and of having no serious government policy with regard to the fluctuation of migrants, which should correspond to the needs of the labor market and companies as well as the capacity to receive them" (*partitodemocratico.it*, 8 January).

The Democratic Party is a capitalist party which offers itself as a more rational and efficient force for managing the interests of the Italian bourgeoisie, and

ICL Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program

The Declaration of Principles of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) is a concrete expression of our purpose: to build national sections of a democratic-centralist international which can lead the struggle for worldwide socialist revolution.

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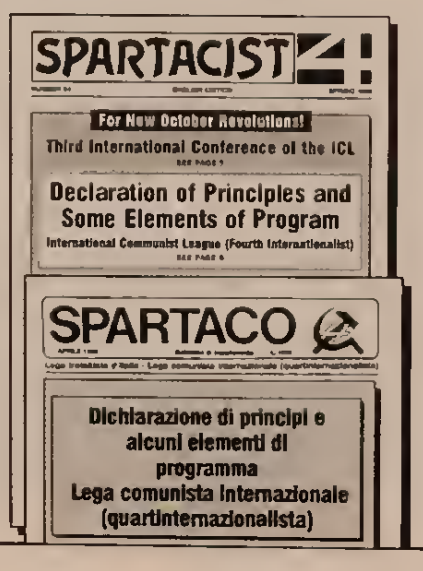

which, especially when in opposition, dresses up as the "friend" of workers and immigrants. Rifondazione Comunista, a party with a working-class base and a bourgeois program, is groping around in a permanent crisis after being discredited by its participation in the anti-worker Prodi government and marginalized by the Democratic Party. In spite of the slaps in the face it has received, Rifondazione continues to beg for electoral alliances with the Democratic Party. [RC] secretary Ferrero went so far as to propose to put Pierferdinando Casini, ex-minister in the Berlusconi government, at the head of a new electoral coalition against Berlusconi, christened by Ferrero: "Committee of National Liberation" (*La Repubblica*, 21 December 2009). We of the Lega Trotskista d'Italia have always *opposed voting in any way* for Rifondazione and Unione (or today Rifondazione and the PD) coalitions in capitalist popular fronts, which tie the workers to their exploiters. These coalitions are based on the lie that workers can run capitalism alongside a supposedly progressive wing of the bourgeoisie; in the name of the coalition, the workers are forced to accept the interests of their exploiters.

The various decomposition products of Rifondazione—Partito Comunista dei Lavoratori, Sinistra Critica and Partito di Alternativa Comunista (PDAC)—share these politics. Even if at the moment they do not want to be compromised directly by electoral blocs with Rifondazione, they supported this party for 15 years, voting for the coalitions Rifondazione was part of; their political horizon is to "get rid of Berlusconi," the lowest common denominator of today's parliamentary cretinism.

The head of the PCL, Marco Ferrando, displayed his enthusiasm for the desperate revolt in Rosarno, but his conclusion is as always the request for "an immediate united mobilization of the entire political left and the unions to side with the revolt against state repression" (*pclavoratori.it*, 8 January), i.e., a mobilization of those very forces that contributed to creating the conditions for the current racist oppression when they were in government. On a more general political level, the PCL argues: "It is time, therefore, for the entire left everywhere to break with the PD and with the center-left to stand as an autonomous pole, as an alternative to the two existing poles, representing independent rights of the working world" (*pclavoratori.it*, 26 January). For more than ten years, the PCL (and its predecessors) have been calling for an "autonomous pole" of "the whole left." At present, this seems to be limited to Rifondazione Comunista and Sinistra Ecologia Libertà, which in turn contains various scraps of Democratici di Sinistra [Left Democrats, the more right-wing component of the former Italian Communist Party, which had parted ways with Rifondazione] and bourgeois parties like the Greens.

This "autonomous pole" serves no purpose except to demonstrate the PCL's willingness to be the last link in a syphilitic chain in which the PCL would hang on to the coattails of Rifondazione, which is glued to the trouser legs of Di Pietro [ex-public prosecutor, now leader of the bourgeois party Italia dei Valori], who swears loyalty to the Democratic Party. Over the last 15 years, Rifondazione, precursor of the current PCL (and of PDAC too), gave electoral support to the anti-worker and anti-immigrant coalitions of Unione and Rifondazione.

In its statement on Rosarno, the PCL rightly demands "the abolition of all the anti-immigrant legislation of the last 12 years." They forget to say where they were during those 12 years: inside Rifondazione, where they remained peacefully, even when all the RC parliamentarians voted en bloc for the Turco-Napolitano law.

Workers of the World Unite!

Since Italy was transformed from a country of emigration into a country of immigration at the beginning of the 1990s, the oppression of immigrants has become one of the key aspects of capitalist rule in this country. Today more than 4.5 million immigrants live in Italy (7.2 percent of the population), relegated to the lowest rungs of the proletariat, doing the hardest and worst-paid jobs under conditions of extreme vulnerability. These workers, deprived of rights, can be exploited by the capitalists to the limits of their physical tolerance. They are hired and fired simply according to seasonal or temporary demand.

At the same time, the social power of immigrant workers, who represent a growing and significant component of the working class in whole industrial sectors, from the building trades to the metal industry, has increased. This is demonstrated by the one million immigrant workers who have joined the unions, almost all of them only in the last ten years. The fact that in the course of a few years, hundreds of thousands of immigrant workers have joined unions and taken part in hard class battles is evidence of their consciousness and combativity. In the last two years, it has often been immigrant workers in the cooperatives (at Bennett in Origgio, at Fiege and at GLS in southern Milan, to mention but a few cases in Lombardy), who have played a leading role in hard strikes that succeeded in spiking the bosses' arrogance.

The struggle for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and to eliminate racist oppression is indissolubly linked to the struggle to bring down the system of capitalist exploitation. As we wrote in the "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program" of the International Communist League (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998):

> "Modern capitalism, i.e., imperialism, reaching into all areas of the planet, in the course of the class struggle and as economic need demands, brings into the proletariat at its bottom new sources of cheaper labor, principally immigrants from poorer and less-developed regions of the world—workers with few rights who are deemed more disposable in times of economic contraction. Thus capitalism in ongoing fashion creates different strata among the workers, while simultaneously amalgamating the workers of many different lands. Everywhere, the capitalists, abetted by aristocracy-of-labor opportunists, try to poison class consciousness and solidarity among the workers by fomenting religious, national and ethnic divisions. The struggle for the unity and integrity of the working class against chauvinism and racism is thus a vital task for the proletarian vanguard."

Our aim in defending immigrants is to win workers to the consciousness that they must oppose the whole capitalist system. We do not seek to patch up the system by putting forward an alternative policy on immigration. We fight against every form of oppression and discrimination and to wrest improvements, however minimal, from the capitalists and their state. But only when the working class and its revolutionary leadership have seized political power from the ruling class and taken control of the economy away from them can we be concerned with the ebbs and flows of the workforce. We take no responsibility for the bourgeoisie's immigration policy today. We have no advice to give them. We try to organize the proletariat to destroy this system and establish proletarian power. Our ideal, as explained by Lenin in *What Is To Be Done?* (1902):

Petrograd, July 1920: Delegates leave opening session of Second Congress of Communist International. Inset: First Issue of Journal of Comintern, founded in 1919.

International Institute for Social History

> "should not be the trade-union secretary, but *the tribune of the people*, who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalise all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth *before all* his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for *all* and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat."

Our model remains that of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The rule of the capitalists and landowners was replaced by that of the working class, which waved the banner of world socialist revolution. In spite of Stalinist degeneration, which in the end threw open the doors to capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92, the Soviet Union demonstrated the capacity of a collectivized, planned economy to provide work, education, health care and decent conditions of life for all. We carry forward the battle for the emancipating principles of the Bolshevik Revolution. And as far as universal and not merely formal equality for workers is concerned, this is what the Constitution of 1918, on which the Soviet workers state was based, said:

> "Article 20. Proceeding from the principle of solidarity of the working people of all nations, the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic grants full political rights of Russian citizens to foreigners residing in the territory of the Russian Republic for purposes of employment, and belonging to the working class or to the peasantry not employing the labour of others: and it empowers the local Soviets to grant to such foreigners, without any cumbersome formalities, Russian citizenship rights."
>
> —quoted in *First Decrees of Soviet Power*, Lawrence & Wishart (London) 1970

The ever-more multiethnic working class in Italy has the social power to liberate itself and all the oppressed in a socialist revolution. The immigrants are not only victims, but increasingly an integral part of the proletariat. Just as the workers who migrated from southern Italy played a key role in the pre-revolutionary struggles which shook capitalist power in the Italian "hot autumn" of 1969, so too are immigrant workers destined to play a fundamental role when class struggle heats up in this country. In addition, immigrant workers represent a human bridge to the oppressed masses of the semicolonial countries from which they come, posing the question of the struggle for proletarian revolution internationally. As Lenin wrote in a 1913 article titled "Capitalism and Workers' Immigration":

> "There can be no doubt that dire poverty alone compels people to abandon their native land, and that the capitalists exploit the immigrant workers in the most shameless manner. But only reactionaries can shut their eyes to the *progressive* significance of this modern migration of nations. Emancipation from the yoke of capital is impossible without the further development of capitalism, and without the class struggle that is based on it. And it is into this struggle that capitalism is drawing the masses of the working people of the *whole* world, breaking down the musty, fusty habits of local life, breaking down national barriers and prejudices, uniting workers from all countries in huge factories and mines in America, Germany, and so forth."

In order for class unity to prevail, it is necessary to construct a revolutionary vanguard party on the model of the Bolshevik Party that Lenin and Trotsky built in the Russian tsarist empire, a party which fights for socialist revolution and for a planned, collectivized economy. A party that fights to win the working class to the struggle against all forms of oppression, a party that knows how to generalize every battle into the consciousness of the need to overthrow the bourgeoisie. Only proletarian revolution, which establishes the power of workers' councils, expropriating the means of production (factories, land, means of transport) and constructing a planned economy on an international scale aimed at meeting the needs of the masses of millions of people and not of a handful of exploiters, can create the social wealth and equality to eliminate wars, crises and racist discrimination. This is the aim of the Lega Trotskista d'Italia and all the sections of the International Communist League.■

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Gulf Disaster...

(continued from page 1)

> whether explosive gas was getting into the system as it was being cemented, and began removing mud that protected the well before it was sealed with cement plugs."

As the *New York Times* (21 June) documented in depth, to save money BP directed Transocean to remove a layer of redundancy from the blowout preventer and replace one of its secondary rams with a "test ram" that would reduce the time it took to conduct certain well tests. That preventer was supposedly the last line of defense, "but the line did not hold."

On April 2, Obama declared that oil rigs "don't cause spills." Eighteen days later, the Deepwater Horizon went up in flames. Since the spill, Obama has worked overtime to protect BP, even as he prattled on about looking for "whose ass to kick."

In fact, the Obama administration stands out for its special relationship with BP, which donated more to his 2008 election campaign than to the McCain-Palin ticket. The administration purveyed ludicrously low estimates of the oil spilled and intimidated government scientists who pointed to higher numbers. Obama's vaunted $20 billion escrow fund to be paid by BP over the next four years is a drop in the bucket compared to the actual cost of the devastation. More to the point, the fund is designed to help *protect* BP from potentially losing hundreds of billions in lawsuits.

The Minerals Management Service—now renamed the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation, and Enforcement—supposedly regulates the oil industry for the Department of the Interior. The MMS provides a literal definition to being in bed with one's adversary (as in sex and cocaine parties for executives). Two months after Obama took office, the agency dutifully approved BP's application for its Deepwater Horizon well, a work of fiction that promised, among other things, to protect such animals as walruses, sea otters and sea lions. Needless to say, such cold-water mammals do not exist in the semitropical Gulf.

White House residents change, but not the role of the government and its agencies. The *Rolling Stone* exposé quoted a representative of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, which represents federal whistle blowers: "Employees describe being in Interior—not just MMS, but the other agencies—as the third Bush term."

BP—with its track record of workers maimed and killed through cost-cutting and ruthless speedup and its CEO Tony Hayward, a study in capitalist swinemanship—is easy to hate. A 2005 explosion at a BP refinery in Texas killed 15 workers and injured 170, while in November 2009 a pipeline at Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, ruptured. But BP is no exception to the functioning of this industry—whether the owners are American, British or anything else. In the eyes of the capitalist cutthroats, fatalities in the dangerous extractive industries are just so much collateral damage. On April 2, less than three weeks before the Deepwater Horizon disaster, five workers were killed in an explosion at Tesoro's oil refinery plant in Anacortes, Washington. Three days later, 29 miners died in an explosion at the Upper Big Branch coal mine in Raleigh County, West Virginia.

AFP

May 3: Convict labor from Elayn Hunt Correctional Center in Louisiana being drilled for Gulf Coast cleanup.

The destruction wrought by oil and mining companies spans the globe. A big difference between the explosion in the Gulf of Mexico and other disasters is that this one hit right off the U.S. coastline. In Nigeria's Niger River delta, some 1.5 million tons of oil—50 times the pollution unleashed by the Exxon Valdez disaster—has been spilled over the last half century. Oil companies in the region, including U.S.-owned Chevron and ExxonMobil, are protected by government and private troops who not only wage war against rebels but also mete out repression against residents seeking redress for the oil giants' ravages. A *New York Times* (16 June) article reported: "The oil pours out nearly every week, and some swamps are long since lifeless. Perhaps no place on earth has been as battered by oil, experts say, leaving residents here astonished at the nonstop attention paid to the gusher half a world away in the Gulf of Mexico." The article quoted a Nigerian official who said, "Whatever cry we cry is not heard outside of here."

Industrial murder and environmental devastation are endemic to the workings of the capitalist system. Only when the working class rips industry from the hands of the capitalists and establishes a planned socialist economy on a world scale will the enormous resources of the planet be put to use for all of humanity. When the workers rule, technology and productive resources will be expanded to overcome scarcity and provide a decent life for all. The fight for a socialist future requires forging revolutionary workers parties that will lead all the exploited and oppressed in proletarian revolution.

Labor: Organize the Oil Industry!

Across the U.S., an estimated 177 workers on average die *every day* from work-related causes. As we noted following the Upper Big Branch mine explosion, outfits like the Mine Safety and Health Administration "do not exist to protect workers. While occasionally giving the employers a slap on the wrist, they serve to breed faith in the agencies of the ruling class as a substitute for union struggle" ("Industrial Murder in West Virginia," *WV* No. 957, 23 April).

The trade unions are the only effective safeguard working people have against the rapaciousness of the capitalist bosses. It is necessary to fight for ***the union organization of the oil industry, for union safety committees able to shut down production at any point.*** This is a question of life and death for oil and gas workers, who between 2002 and 2007 suffered a work fatality rate that was seven times the average for all occupations.

Organizing the oil extraction industry will be no easy task. The bosses, backed by the capitalist state, are hell-bent on keeping the industry union-free. Large numbers of oil workers used to be represented by the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union, which in 2005 became part of the United Steelworkers union (USW). Today, a June 15 AFL-CIO posting on the Gulf disaster admits, "offshore exploration, production and service industry in the Gulf of Mexico, to the best of our knowledge, is 100 percent nonunion."

This is a striking indictment of the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy, which has overseen a massive decline in union membership throughout industry over the last several decades. The union tops' class collaboration is exemplified by their loyalty to the Democratic Party and their reliance on the state agencies of the class enemy. Instead of initiating a drive to organize non-union oil workers in the wake of the Gulf Coast disaster, the USW bureaucracy begged for greater government oversight—i.e., leave the lives of workers in the hands of the bosses' political representatives.

There must be a fight for a new labor leadership, one based on a program of class struggle and political independence from the capitalist political parties and state agencies. Crucial to this perspective is the struggle against the flag-waving of the labor tops, who preach the lie of a unity of interests between American workers and "their own" exploiters, poisoning the potential for international labor solidarity. Typical is the June 15 AFL-CIO statement, which complains that the oil industry is "increasingly foreign."

American companies are second to none in injuring and killing workers. A list of refinery fires and fatalities for 2009 and 2010 in the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees newsletter (Spring 2010) includes a veritable who's who in the oil industry, with such U.S. companies as ConocoPhillips, ExxonMobil, Shell (U.S. subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell) and Chevron as well as BP and others. The newsletter detailed 40 deaths and injuries in the petroleum industry in April alone. Three workers were injured in a fire at ExxonMobil's Baton Rouge, Louisiana, refinery on April 14. On April 19, the day before the BP rig exploded, a contractor died in a crane accident at a Motiva Enterprises refinery in Port Arthur, Texas. On April 29, two workers and a supervisor were injured in a fire at Valero Energy Corp.'s Memphis refinery.

It was, in fact, a U.S. company that perpetrated the world's worst industrial catastrophe. In the early hours of 3 December 1984, Union Carbide's pesticide plant in Bhopal, India, began to leak methyl isocyanate gas and other toxic chemicals. Nearly 600,000 people were exposed, resulting in the deaths of some 15,000 human beings. The U.S. has since ignored demands that Warren Anderson, the head of Union Carbide at the time, be extradited to India.

Expropriate Big Oil! For an International Planned Socialist Economy!

The devastation in the Gulf of Mexico, the Niger Delta and elsewhere is but a piece of the picture of plunder carried out by Big Oil, which has controlled the economic fate of entire nations. It was to save Anglo-Iranian, a prior incarnation of BP, that the CIA and British imperialists overthrew the nationalist regime of Mohammad Mossadeq in Iran in 1953 after he nationalized the company's holding in that country. (The company's name changed the year after.) In his classic 1916 work,

Mexico...

(continued from page 2)

and maintain capitalist exploitation. The bourgeois state (in essence, the army, police, courts and prisons) is an organ of systematic repression to maintain the rule of the capitalists. The power of the working class lies in its relationship to the means of production and its role in setting the gears of the economy in motion.

Over the last decade, workers in the miners union have given ample displays of their will to fight and have achieved important partial victories. However, these struggles have been ideologically framed within the nationalist populism of the bourgeois PRD. But the PRD is a party of capital—the class enemy—that represents the more nationalist wing of the bourgeoisie. The differences between the PRD, the PAN [ruling right-wing clericalist National Action Party] and the PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party, which ran Mexico for decades] are reduced to *the manner* in which capitalist exploitation is administered: whereas the PAN considers it more appropriate to march hand in hand with the imperialists and rules ever more with the iron fist of repression in order to push forward its starvation measures, AMLO [PRD politician Andrés Manuel López Obrador] and the PRD seek to win the support of the working class in order to renegotiate the terms of subordination to American imperialism while trying to stabilize this system of exploitation and oppression.

Regardless of the ideology of this or that section of the bourgeoisie, the interests of workers and bosses are fundamentally counterposed. There are only two real choices: the side of the workers or that of the capitalists who exploit them. The union bureaucracy, while obtaining its salaries and benefits from the unions, in the end supports the capitalist system and the politicians who front for it. As we wrote in March 2006 in the aftermath of the Pasta de Conchos tragedy and in defense of the miners union against the attacks of the bosses and their state [see "Protest Cop Killing of Steel Workers," *WV* No. 869, 28 April 2006]:

> "Class-struggle defense of the unions requires a fight for their complete and unconditional independence from the bourgeoisie and its state—the prerequisite to achieving trade-union democracy and to transforming the unions into organs of struggle for the interests of the great exploited masses. This means breaking with all illusions in the bosses' parties—PRI, PRD, PAN. This means a fight to build a revolutionary workers party to smash the profit-driven, murderous system of capitalism and replace it with the rule of the working class through international socialist revolution. That is the purpose of the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)."■

Programmatic Statement of the Spartacist League/U.S.

Adopted in 1999 at the Tenth National Conference of the SL/U.S.

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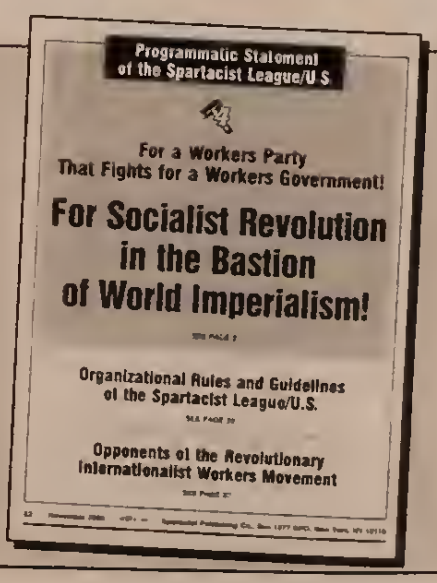

Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitolism, Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained:

> "Imperialism is the epoch of finance capital and of monopolies, which introduce everywhere the striving for domination, not for freedom. Whatever the political system the result of these tendencies is everywhere reaction and an extreme intensification of antagonisms in this field."

In thrall to the "democratic" political system of American capitalist rule, the reformist left responded to the disaster in the Gulf with a new round of pleas to the Obama government. In a June 14 online statement, the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) credited the Obama White House for the $20 billion escrow fund, calling this ploy "a dramatic shift in their policy towards BP" and claiming that this was the result of "mass grassroots organizing" like the PSL's "Seize BP" campaign. Warning that this "does not mean the Obama administration is firmly against BP," the PSL aims to stiffen the administration's resolve through the pressure tactic of an "independent body" to control the fund "run by representatives of the fishers, shrimpers, crabbers, unions, small business people and workers in the tourism and recreation industry, local elected officials, clergy, as well as independent scientists and environmentalists."

For its part, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) published a lengthy online piece titled "The Making of an Eco-Catastrophe" (25 June) that criticized Obama's "concessions to the right" on oil drilling. The article concluded that the only way such concessions will stop "is if a grassroots movement puts more pressure" on Obama "from the left." Echoing petty-bourgeois environmentalists, the article demands "an immediate halt to all deep-water drilling" and a plan to "phase out offshore drilling altogether." The ISO calls for Congress to pass "a comprehensive energy bill," offering advice to the capitalist rulers on how they can rearrange tax policies in favor of "green" jobs and other liberal causes.

Lohuizen/NOOR

Nigeria: Villagers survey damage caused by Shell Oil wellhead that has spilled toxic oil on farmland for years. Some 546 million gallons of oil have spilled into the Niger Delta over the last five decades.

Through their insipid pleadings, the PSL, ISO et al. promote the illusion that bourgeois—i.e., Democratic—politicians can be pressured to represent the interests of working people and the oppressed. These reformists see their role as tinkering with the machinery of the capitalist state. They appeal to the government that, as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels explained in the *Communist Manifesto*, serves as "a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." All the reformist chatter about "pressure" and "people's committees" is an obstacle to the necessary struggle for a socialist revolution that expropriates Big Oil and all the means of production.

In the wake of the Gulf disaster, many liberals and environmentalists have renewed calls to slash oil production in favor of "renewable energy." We wrote in "The World Oil Racket" (*WV* No. 535, 27 September 1991) that it is commonly assumed that the boards of directors of, say, Greenpeace, and nf Exxon are fundamentally antagonistic to each other. Yet each in its own way propagates the false notion that consumption is outgrowing oil supplies. Ecology activists use this argument to push a utopian program of economic conservation and primitivism; the heirs of Rockefeller use it to justify extortionate prices and the imperialist rape of impoverished oil-producing countries.

The fact is that fossil fuels are necessary for any modern civilization. Criminal disregard for human life and ecological devastation stem from a social system in which production is based on profit rather than human need. As we stated in "The World Oil Racket":

> "The ecology activists are right in one important respect: the massive burning of hydrocarbons—whether oil or coal—is in the long term bad for the earth's atmosphere. The answer, however, is not to save oil by cutting the living standards of North American and European working people. A planned socialist economy would carry out the scientific research required to develop safer, more efficient sources of energy (including nuclear and solar energy). But there is one absolutely necessary ***precondition*** for an energy-efficient future. The heirs of Rockefeller and sheiks of Araby must be swept into the dustbin of history."■

Economy...

(continued from page 6)

officials of the Federal Reserve and Democratic Congressional leaders. Whatever right/left ideological divide exists between the two parties had, in this instance, no import whatsoever. Given the Republicans' vocal opposition these days to Obama's tepid proposals for additional regulation of the financial system, one might think that the visceral hostility between Republicans and Democrats would have prevented a bipartisan policy in response to the financial crisis. Quite the contrary. When the vital interests of American finance capital were at stake, the two parties acted in unison.

The three men primarily responsible for the $700 billion bailout fund called TARP (Troubled Asset Relief Program) and related measures were Treasury secretary Henry Paulson, Federal Reserve chairman Ben Bernanke and the president of the key New York branch of the Federal Reserve, Tim Geithner (now Obama's Treasury secretary). Paulson was CEO of Goldman Sachs when in 2006 the Bush gang recruited him as their main economic point man. Paulson's predecessor at both Goldman and the U.S. Treasury was Robert Rubin, a centrist Democrat who served as economic *consigliere* in the Clinton administration in the 1990s. Bernanke, known as a moderate Republican, was chosen in 2005 to replace right-wing ideologue Alan Greenspan as Fed chairman by a presidential committee headed by Dick Cheney, the Darth Vader of the Bush administration. Geithner, a centrist Democrat, was a protégé of Robert Rubin in Clinton's Treasury. Paulson, Bernanke and Geithner worked closely together on behalf of their Wall Street masters without substantive political differences.

Bush and Cheney, for all their strident championing of "free market" capitalism, did not hesitate to invoke massive government intervention in the face of the financial collapse. To do so, they simply turned over policymaking during the crisis to Paulson and Bernanke. Likewise, Democratic Congressional leaders gave the two a green light to do what they wanted. In July 2008, Paulson told Barney Frank, a liberal Massachusetts Democrat who heads the House Financial Services Committee, that he and Bernanke were considering taking expansive and unprecedented measures in an effort to calm the increasingly troubled financial markets. Frank advised him "to ask for what you need" and promised to support him.

Defending the bailout today, Geithner and others point to the fact that almost all of the TARP money has been repaid. But the financial institutions were able to do so only because the Fed subsequently lent them some $2 trillion, taking as collateral their more "toxic" assets. The government also guaranteed some *$5.4 trillion* of the banks' loans and those of other financial institutions (so-called "counterparties") with which they do business.

Wessel, in particular, underscores that the Wall Street bailout violated the professed ideological principles not just of the Bush administration but of the American capitalist class in general. Indeed, American capitalists will support extensive government intervention in the economy when it serves their interests and is on terms they can dictate—for example, the nationalization of the American Insurance Group (then the largest insurance company in the world) and the bailouts of General Motors and Chrysler.

In this regard, Wessel quotes Gao Xiqing, the head of China's sovereign wealth fund, who quipped: "Now our people are joking that we look at the U.S. and see 'socialism with American characteristics'." This is a play on "socialism with Chinese characteristics," the term long used by the Beijing Stalinist regime to describe its own economic system, one that remains primarily based on state-owned enterprises and banks but has a large capitalist sector.

For Class Struggle to Fight Capitalist Austerity!

As happens in all economic downturns, workers' apprehension over possible job losses has taken a toll on the already low level of labor struggle in the U.S. Last year saw the lowest level of strike activity of any year since World War II, by far. But as the experience of past economic crises also shows, that state of affairs will not last indefinitely.

It is necessary to forge a new leadership of the unions based on the understanding that there are two decisive classes in capitalist society, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, whose interests are irreconcilably opposed. Such a leadership, fighting for the unity of the multiracial proletariat in hard class struggle, would link those struggles to defense of the social interests of black people, Latinos and other oppressed minorities.

Today the question of revolutionary leadership is sharply posed in Europe, where there has been a wave of one-day general strikes against attempts by the capitalist governments to slash the wages of public-sector workers, gut pensions and jack up sales and other taxes. Greece has had a total of six one-day general strikes so far this year. On June 24, some two million demonstrated across France as the country was rocked for the second time in a month by strikes against a government plan to raise the retirement age. In Spain, hundreds of thousands of public-sector workers struck on June 8, while in Italy the six-million-strong CGIL union federation carried out a nationwide stoppage on June 25. However, the workers' evident combativity runs up against the political program of the labor bureaucracies, all of which have a bankrupt strategy of seeking to reform the capitalist system of exploitation. What is needed is the forging of revolutionary parties that can lead the proletariat, at the head of all the oppressed, in sweeping away the capitalist order.

This road was outlined in the 1938 Transitional Program written by Leon Trotsky, co-leader with V.I. Lenin of the October Revolution in 1917. Titled *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International*, the document, written in the midst of the Great Depression, put forward a series of demands that provide a bridge from workers' current consciousness and daily struggles to the need for socialist revolution. Declaring "uncompromising war on the politics of the capitalists which, to a considerable degree, like the politics of their agents, the reformists, aims to place the whole burden of militarism, the crises, the disorganization of the monetary system and all other scourges stemming from capitalism's death agony upon the backs of the toilers," the document stated:

> "Against unemployment, 'structural' as well as 'conjunctural,' the time is ripe to advance, along with the slogan of public works, the slogan of ***a sliding scale of working hours***. Trade unions and other mass organizations should bind the workers and the unemployed together in the solidarity of mutual responsibility. On this basis all the work on hand would then be divided among all existing workers in accordance with how the extent of the working week is defined. The average wage of every worker remains the same as it was under the old working week."

As Trotsky laid out, the fight for employment and decent living conditions for all must point to one final conclusion: the seizure of power by the proletariat and the expropriation of the capitalist class.

The struggle for a shorter workweek under capitalism also points to a fundamental goal of communism: a radical reduction in the labor time necessary to produce the means of consumption. The setting up of an internationally planned, socialist economy will lay the basis for a qualitative development of the world's productive forces for the benefit of all. In a future communist society, everyone (not just a privileged elite) will have the free time and material and cultural resources to fully develop their creative capacities. In his work the *Grundrisse* (also known as the *Economic Manuscripts of 1857-58*), a precursor to *Capital*, Marx noted how such a development of the individual will, in turn, provide for a still greater development of human productivity:

> "The saving of labour time is equivalent to the increase of free time, i.e. time for the full development of the individual, which itself, as the greatest productive force, in turn reacts upon the productive power of labour....
> "Free time—which is both leisure and time for higher activity—has naturally transformed its possessor into another subject; and it is then as this other subject that he enters into the immediate production process."

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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China...

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despite the present sellout labor leadership, so they must defend China against capitalist counterrevolution despite the Stalinist bureaucracy's repressive rule and its many accommodations to capitalism.

In offering up low-wage migrant workers for exploitation by foreign corporations, the CCP bureaucracy effectively acts as a labor contractor for the imperialists and offshore Chinese capitalists. The bureaucracy itself now includes substantial elements with family or other ties to capitalist entrepreneurs, and several years ago the rubber-stamp National People's Congress enacted a law strengthening private property rights. Nonetheless, the CCP bureaucratic caste still rests on the material base of the collectivized economy, from which its power and privileges are derived.

The Chinese working class must sweep away the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy, which has gravely weakened the system of nationalized property internally while conciliating imperialism at the international level. A proletarian political revolution is needed to defend and extend the gains of the workers state and place power directly in the hands of elected workers and peasants councils. This could inspire proletarian socialist revolution throughout capitalist Asia, including in the industrial powerhouse of Japan, and elsewhere. The emergence of a China ruled by workers and peasants councils would also help spur the workers of Taiwan to overthrow their capitalist ruling class, leading to the revolutionary reunification of China.

Front Line

August 2001: Workers protest layoffs and official plundering at factory in Beijing. Banner reads: "Where Has 150 Million Yuan of State Property Gone?"

The Chinese Tinderbox

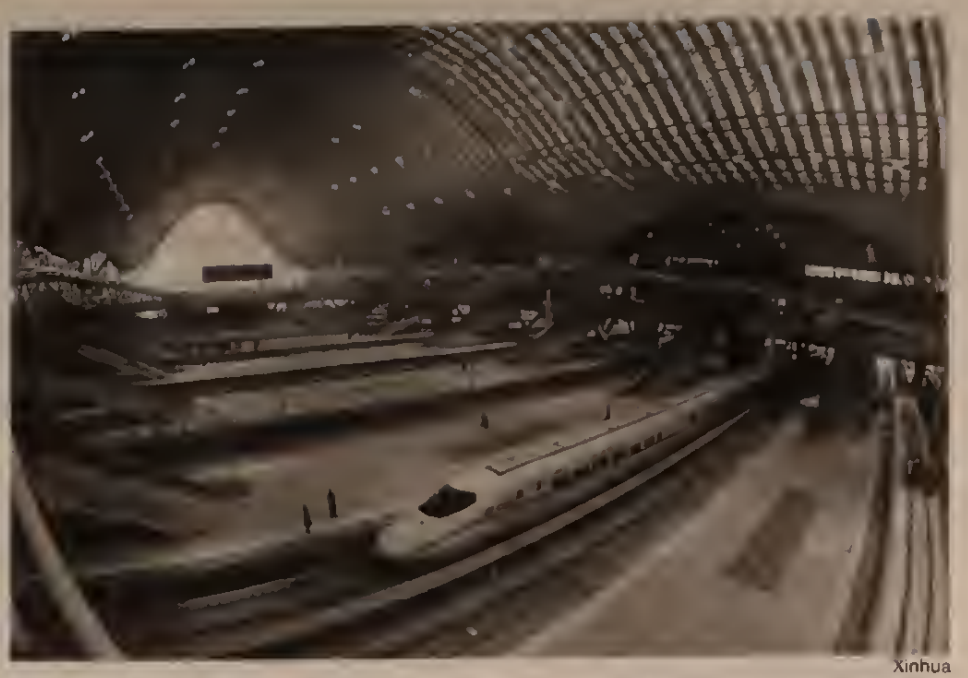
Faced with growing discontent at the base of society, Hu Jintao's CCP regime has been slowing down some "free market" measures in the name of building a "harmonious society." The CCP bureaucrats have increased their "pro-worker" rhetoric, while authorities in many provinces and major cities have felt compelled to substantially raise the minimum wage. The bureaucratic CCP regime defends the gains embodied in the Chinese deformed workers state only to the extent that it fears the working class.

Unusually, the CCP rulers initially allowed extensive domestic media coverage of the strikes, especially those at Japanese-owned factories. This was accompanied by an equally unusual candor about China's increasing social inequalities. Citing a leader of the All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), *China Daily* (13 May) reported that the portion of the country's gross domestic product going to workers' wages fell from 57 percent to 37 percent from 1983 to 2005. An editorial in *Global Times* (2 June), a *China Daily* spin-off, stated:

> "Admittedly, in the three decades of opening-up, ordinary workers are among those who have received the smallest share of economic prosperity.... The temporary stoppage of production lines in the four Honda plants, at a time of increasing market demand for Japanese-brand cars, highlights the necessity of organized labor protection in Chinese factories."

Doubtless concerned by the spread of the strikes, the bureaucracy has since sharply curtailed such media coverage.

Most of the strike leaders appear to be young migrant workers, notably including women workers. They have shown impressive militancy and organizational skills, including the use of the internet and text messaging to rally the workers and follow developments elsewhere. Significantly, workers in Foshan and at another Honda plant in Zhongshan decided to elect their own strike leaders and negotiating committees independent of the ACFTU, the official union federation tied to the ruling CCP. In a number of cases, ACFTU bureaucrats have openly colluded with management to try and force a return to work. Thugs organized by the union bureaucracy physically attacked Foshan Honda strikers on May 31, causing several injuries. The next day the same ACFTU bureaucrats issued a public apology, while trying to play down their role in the assault.



Xinhua

High-speed railway in Wuhan, December 2009. Collectivized core of China's economy has spurred economic growth and development while capitalist world has been mired in crisis.

Among the demands raised by the Foshan strikers was "a reorganization of the local trade union; re-elections should be held for union chairman and other representatives." Strikers in Zhongshan held a protest march on June 11 that similarly demanded the right to choose their own union leaders. While the Stalinist rulers removed the right to strike from China's constitution in 1982, various reforms to labor laws in 2008 have made it easier for workers to organize to defend their interests. Many strikers have made clear to reporters that they believe they have the right to take strike action, citing the legal reforms.

An open letter issued on behalf of the Foshan strikers' negotiating committee by Li Xiaojuan, a young woman worker, declared:

> "We must maintain a high degree of unity and not let the representatives of Capital divide us.... This factory's profits are the fruits of our bitter toil.... This struggle is not just about the interests of our 1,800 workers. We also care about the rights and interests of all Chinese workers."
>
> —quoted in *Financial Times* (London), 10 June

Chinese workers need a class-struggle leadership to advance their struggle to wrest as much as possible from the capitalist companies that are exploiting them, fight the ravages of inflation and improve their working and living conditions. Workers in state-owned industry also need such a leadership to protect and advance their living standards and to fight against bureaucratic abuse. Integral to the fight to replace the parasitic CCP regime with the rule of workers and peasants councils is building trade unions free from bureaucratic control. Even in a workers state ruled by genuine workers democracy, unions are necessary to protect against possible encroachments and abuses, and to help plan production and work methods. Addressing the question of trade unions in the early Soviet workers state, V.I. Lenin insisted that communists should fight for leadership of the unions based on their program and practice on behalf of the workers state. They must be selected by the workers and not appointed by the state.

The fight for unions free of bureaucratic control must take as its starting point defense of the social gains of the 1949 Revolution against imperialism and capitalist restoration. This is especially important given the maneuvers of pro-capitalist forces like the Hong Kong-based *China Labour Bulletin (CLB)*, which promotes Western-style "democracy," i.e., the rule of the capitalist exploiters with a parliamentary facade. Formerly a partisan of so-called "independent unions," the *CLB* now calls to work inside the ACFTU in order to break it from CCP control. While masquerading as a workers organization, the *CLB* is a counterrevolutionary group with direct ties to U.S. imperialism. Its leader, Han Dongfang, is also vice-chair of the World Movement for Democracy, an outfit founded and run by the National Endowment for Democracy, a notorious CIA front.

In covering the Chinese strikes, the Western bourgeois media raise the spectre of Polish Solidarność, the anti-Communist "trade union" that spearheaded the drive for capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the Soviet Union in the 1980s. The media's line, stated or otherwise, is that Chinese workers must strike out against the Communist Party regime and embrace the "free market." For its part, the CCP regime also raises the spectre of Solidarność, falsely claiming that any organized opposition to its rule must be pro-capitalist and counterrevolutionary. An article by Willy Lam, a professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong,

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Rights...

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administration's 1996 "anti-terror" law, whose wording was so vague that just about anything could be construed as "material support." The 1996 measure's reach was extended when the Bush administration's USA Patriot Act was rushed into law, with overwhelming Democratic support, after the September 11 terror attacks. The "war on terror" declared by Bush, and continued with a vengeance by the Obama White House, has meant imperialist carnage abroad and a move toward unfettered power by the executive branch, relying on a compliant judiciary. As we warned in *Workers Vanguard* No. 770 (7 December 2001):

> "The purpose of the new measures is to revive and deepen the broad-ranging repression and intimidation that marked the Cold War McCarthyite witchhunt of 50 years ago. The aim today as then is to coerce the entire population into ideological conformity, with the government wielding the spectre of seemingly pervasive 'Islamic terrorism' as a surrogate for Communism."

The Court's decision, written by Chief Justice John Roberts, affirmed that once the government alleges "terrorism," it can violate any Constitutional right in the interest of "national security." As for the claim that the "material support" proscription violated the HLP's First Amendment right of speech, Roberts ludicrously "explained" that they could say whatever they want on behalf of a group designated terrorist—just not to a member of the group or in consultation with any of them! Regarding the right of association, Roberts declared that the law does not bar someone from joining such a group—you just can't discuss anything with a fellow member!

Roberts did not deem it worth mentioning that exercising the right of association by joining a group on the Feds' "terrorist" list carries with it the "right" to be targeted for assassination by the government. Earlier this year, the Obama administration took the unprecedented step of adding a U.S. citizen to the government's official assassination targets: Muslim cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, believed to be an Al Qaeda operative hiding in Yemen. Months before this was made official policy, on 28 October 2009 the FBI carried out the execution-style killing of Imam Luqman Ameen Abdullah, leader of the Masjid Al-Haqq mosque in Detroit, described as "a highly placed leader of a nationwide radical fundamentalist Sunni group" (See "Feds' Detroit 'Terror' Kill," *WV* No. 954, 12 March).

The Court's ruling constitutes an ominous attack on the civil liberties of us all. It bolsters the repressive powers the capitalist state employs against perceived opponents of racist capitalist rule. We pointed out shortly after the September 11 attacks that the "anti-terror" measures would be used against labor, blacks and immigrants on issues far removed from the pretext for which they were adopted. We cited as precedents the "anti-fascist" 1940 Smith Act, which was first used to imprison Trotskyists and, later, leaders of the Communist Party, and the 1980s RICO "anti-racketeering" laws, which supposedly targeted "organized crime" but were largely used to break strikes and exert government control over unions like the Teamsters.

For the U.S. imperialists—the most dangerous terrorists on the planet—the self-serving designation of "foreign terrorist organization" is elastic and constantly shifting. Although the Islamic reactionaries of Al Qaeda and the Taliban are today at the top of the U.S. hit list, when these forces were throwing acid in the faces of unveiled women in Afghanistan in the 1980s, the U.S. government hailed them as "freedom fighters" against the Soviet Union, whose intervention in that country was unambiguously progressive. The U.S. gave the *mujahedin* cutthroats billions in aid to kill Red Army soldiers. Washington's terrorist designation has included the Irish Republican Army and Nelson Mandela's African National Congress during the reign of apartheid in South Africa. Among the "fugitives" on the government's "domestic terrorist" list today are former Black Panther Assata Shakur, who after surviving a cop assassination attempt escaped prison and found refuge in Cuba, as well as Puerto Rican nationalists and even radical environmentalists.

The Supreme Court ruling is a major triumph for President Obama's nominee to the Supreme Court, Elena Kagan, who as solicitor general argued the administration's case. Kagan, who staunchly advocates expanding the power of the imperial presidency, asserted that an attorney filing a legal brief on behalf of an organization designated "terrorist" would be guilty of providing "material support to terrorism." This is precisely the fate of leftist attorney Lynne Stewart who, along with her legal assistant Ahmed Abdel Sattar and translator Mohamed Yousry, was convicted of frame-up charges of support to terrorism for her determined legal representation of blind Egyptian sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, who was imprisoned for an alleged plot to blow up New York City landmarks in the early 1990s. At stake in this case is the very right to legal representation.

Obama's Justice Department, headed by Attorney General Eric Holder, is seeking to increase the 70-year-old Stewart's sentence to 30 years—i.e., a death sentence. A sentencing hearing is scheduled for July 15. ***Free Stewart, Abdel Sattar and Yousry now!***

The Court's ruling hands a powerful weapon to Obama, which, like many others bequeathed by his predecessors Clinton and Bush, he has shown every inclination to use—and then some. Although Obama had always made clear his dedication to carry on the "war on terrorism," bourgeois liberals and reformist "socialists" fed illusions that his administration would curb the "extremes" of the Bush administration. Many of those who regularly protested against Bush and Cheney barely utter a peep as Obama escalates the attack on our rights. Nearly 200 detainees remain at the torture camp in Guantánamo, with many more imprisoned by the U.S. in even more hellish conditions at the U.S. air base in Bagram, Afghanistan. We demand: Free all the detainees now!

The White House has made it clear that it is not about to shut down Guantánamo. It is also expanding government efforts to thwart exposure of the crimes of U.S. imperialism. The Justice Department has invoked "state secrets" to shield the government from lawsuits by America's torture victims and has greatly stepped up prosecutions for leaks to the press. Among those recently arrested is Bradley Manning, a 22-year-old Army intelligence analyst suspected of passing a video showing a U.S. Apache helicopter firing on Iraqi civilians in 2007 to the Web site Wikileaks.org.

In addition to expanding the hated "no-fly" list, this February Obama signed into law yet another extension of the USA Patriot Act with its provisions of indefinite detention, expansion of secret FBI searches of homes and offices, elimination of formal restrictions on CIA domestic spying, wiretapping and Internet surveillance. Last month, Holder announced plans to seek legislation curtailing the *Miranda* rights of American citizens held by the cops as "terrorist suspects," a clear threat to further undermine the right to legal counsel.

As the chief executive of the bourgeois state, Obama's job is to prosecute U.S. imperialism's wars and to manage and bolster the repressive apparatus it employs to exercise control of the population at home. Consisting at its core of the cops, military, courts and prisons, the capitalist state is an instrument of organized violence to defend the bourgeoisie's class rule and profits. The capitalist state cannot be pressured to serve the interests of the exploited workers and oppressed masses but must be shattered through a proletarian revolution that establishes a workers government based on a socialized, planned economy.

The Spartacist League fights to build a workers party that acts as a tribune of the people. In fighting every injustice and every manifestation of social oppression, such a party would, as Lenin's Bolsheviks did, make the working class conscious of its historic task of bringing down the whole system of exploitation, poverty and war that is capitalism. Join us in this fight!■

in the *Wall Street Journal* (14 June) reported: "In unpublicized, closed-door talks on the labor situation, Mr. Hu and other Politburo members have cited late patriarch Deng Xiaoping's warnings about how Poland's Solidarity Movement undermined Communist Parties throughout the former Eastern Bloc."

Unlike the bulk of the world's ostensible socialists, the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) opposed Solidarność and fought to the end against capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the Soviet Union. But a Solidarność-type development is ***not*** what is happening in China today. The growth of Solidarność as a counterrevolutionary movement was shaped by factors that have no parallel in China, including the deep roots of the Catholic church in Poland and the role of Polish nationalism, which was wielded against the Soviet Union. Moreover, the strikes in China today are protesting brutal exploitation in large, privately owned capitalist enterprises, which did not exist in Poland circa 1980. Any illusions in capitalist "democracy" among Chinese workers must be vigorously fought. But there is no reason to think that what is developing in China today is a mass pro-capitalist workers movement.

For a Government of Workers and Peasants Councils!

The strikes led by migrant workers, which are in the interest of all Chinese working people, underline the need to abolish the CCP rulers' discriminatory *hukou* household registration system. Legal urban residency, education and health care for migrants from the countryside and their children are severely restricted under this system, making their tenure in the city transitory and insecure. Jobs in state-owned industry, with their associated benefits, have largely remained the preserve of workers with an urban *hukou*.

The migrant workers' insecure status has been a boon to the capitalist exploiters in the foreign-owned sector, who have had a ready labor pool to exploit at very low wages. While many young workers who now toil in the factories grew up in the cities with migrant parents, they too are not considered urban residents under the bureaucracy's outrageous *hukou* restrictions. Migrant workers must have the same rights and access to benefits as legally recognized urban residents!

A government of elected workers and peasants councils would represent ***all*** sectors of the proletariat and the rural toilers. Crucial questions facing the workers state can be resolved effectively only when those who labor decide. As the Marxist leader Leon Trotsky explained in his searing indictment of the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy, *The Revolution Betrayed* (1936): "It is not a question of substituting one ruling clique for another, but of changing the very methods of administering the economy and guiding the culture of the country. Bureaucratic autocracy must give place to Soviet democracy."

The CCP bureaucracy's pro-market policies have strengthened the forces of counterrevolution inside China. At the same time, the social power of the industrial working class has been greatly augmented by economic development. The inclusion of at least 150 million rural migrant workers in China's urban economy is a factor of enormous potential significance. A Leninist-Trotskyist party is needed to provide a revolutionary, proletarian and internationalist road forward. As we wrote in "Women Workers and the Contradictions of China Today" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 61, Spring 2009):

> "At some point, likely when bourgeois elements in and around the bureaucracy move to eliminate CCP political power, the explosive social tensions building up in Chinese society will shatter the political structure of the ruling bureaucratic caste. When that happens, China's fate will be starkly posed. Either the workers will sweep away the parasitic ruling elite through a proletarian political revolution that defends and extends the gains of the 1949 Revolution and makes China a bastion of the struggle for world socialism, or capitalist counterrevolution will triumph, bringing back devastating imperialist subjugation and exploitation."

A revolutionary workers and peasants government would put an end to bureaucratic arbitrariness and corruption. It would expropriate the new class of domestic capitalist entrepreneurs and renegotiate the terms of foreign investment in the interests of the working people. It would create a centrally planned and managed economy under conditions of workers democracy—not the autarkic, bureaucratic commandism of the Mao years. While struggling to provide at least a basic level of economic security for the whole population, a genuine communist leadership would understand that achieving material prosperity for all hinges on the struggle for socialist revolution in the centers of world capitalism. This perspective is vehemently opposed by the nationalist CCP regime, whose policies derive from the Stalinist dogma of "building socialism in one country." The fact that workers in China's capitalist zones are being exploited by some of the same corporations that exploit workers in Japan, the U.S. and elsewhere creates the potential for international solidarity and points to workers' common interest in the fight for a socialist world.

The survival and advancement of China's revolutionary gains and the all-round modernization of society in the interest of the toiling masses requires an internationally planned socialist economy, which will open the road to a global communist future. That is the goal of the International Communist League, which fights to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International as the world party of proletarian revolution.■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Reuters

Lindquist/NY Times

Left: Striking Honda workers in Foshan confront thugs (wearing caps) from official ACFTU union federation, May 31. Right: Workers demonstrate outside Honda factory in Zhongshan, June 11.

Militant Strike Wave in China

For Class-Struggle Leadership!

Defend the Chinese Bureaucratically Deformed Workers State!

For Proletarian Political Revolution!

The wave of strikes for higher wages and better working conditions that has swept through China in recent weeks must be supported by class-conscious workers around the world. The strikes began on May 17 at a Honda transmission plant in Foshan in the southern province of Guangdong, which workers shut down for nearly three weeks. With the flow of parts from the factory choked off, production was halted at all the company's assembly plants in China.

After the Foshan workers won wage increases of about 30 percent, strikes spread to other factories in the booming Guangdong industrial area and beyond. Most have been at plants owned by foreign corporations, notably the Japanese auto companies. Workers have also struck several Taiwanese-owned factories, including a rubber products plant near Shanghai where around 50 were injured in clashes with police, as well as facilities owned by mainland Chinese capitalists.

The foreign and domestic capitalists operating in China have amassed huge profits by exploiting a workforce largely composed of migrant workers from the countryside. Many workers are forced to work 60 to 70 hours a week at wages barely above subsistence levels. The conditions they face were made vivid in the widely reported wave of suicides at Foxconn's massive electronics facility in Shenzhen, also in Guangdong. At least ten workers have killed themselves this year at this Taiwanese-owned factory complex, where more than 300,000 workers toil long hours under harsh discipline assembling computers and phones for Apple, Dell, Sony and other major American and Japanese corporations. At the same time, the enormous concentration of workers at Foxconn points to the immense potential power of the Chinese working class.

With its vast economic development over the last several decades, China now has by far the largest industrial working class in the world. Thus the struggles waged by workers there are of major significance. As a result of the 1949 Revolution, capitalism was overthrown in China and a collectivized economy was established. Although deformed from its inception by the rule of the Stalinist Chinese Communist Party (CCP) bureaucracy, the revolutionary overturn was a huge victory for working people everywhere. Despite the capitalist inroads created by the CCP regime's "market reforms," China's core economy is still based on nationalized property (see "China's 'Market Reforms' —A Trotskyist Analysis," *WV* Nos. 874 and 875, 4 August and 1 September 2006).

In contrast to the major capitalist countries, which have been mired in deep recessions with tens of millions of job cuts, China's economy has continued to expand over the last two years, even though the export-oriented sector of its economy was buffeted somewhat by the global downturn. It was the ability to marshal resources in the core collectivized sector that prevented China from being dragged into the kind of deep economic crisis that is intrinsic to the capitalist system of production for profit. China's economy is now again growing rapidly, producing significant labor shortages. State investment in cities in China's interior has absorbed much of the labor that had been migrating to the factories of the eastern coastal areas.

The big imperialist powers—the U.S., Japan, Germany et al.—remain determined to restore capitalist rule and fully open up China to capitalist exploitation. Just as workers in capitalist countries must defend their unions against the bosses

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As Obama Ramps Up Attacks on Civil Liberties

Supreme Court Decision Shreds First Amendment Rights

On June 21, the U.S. Supreme Court shredder took another big chunk out of the Bill of Rights. In a 6-3 decision, the high court of U.S. capitalism upheld the prohibition on "material support to terrorism" in a case brought by the Humanitarian Law Project (HLP), civil rights activist Ralph Fertig and other groups and individuals. The plaintiffs had wanted to advise the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) on how to appeal to the United Nations in regard to their struggles against the genocidal wars waged by the U.S.-supported Sri Lankan and Turkish governments against the oppressed Kurdish and Tamil national minorities. They also sought to engage in political advocacy on behalf of Tamils and Kurds and train LTTE members in appealing for tsunami-related relief. In Orwellian "War is peace" fashion, the Court deemed such activity "material support to terrorism."

There should be no misunderstanding of the danger the Court decision represents for any who seek to engage in political dissent, social protest or advocacy of the rights of the oppressed anywhere. By the Court's light, any activity that is considered as giving legitimacy to "terrorists" —from giving money to Muslim charities to interviewing a guerrilla fighter for the press—would be deemed "material support." Engaging in such standard liberal fare as appealing to the imperialists' UN could have gotten the plaintiffs 15 years in prison.

The Supreme Court decision caps a case brought by the HLP 12 years ago. Seeking to avoid prosecution and imprisonment, the HLP had sought a court declaration that their projected activities would not run afoul of the Clinton

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WORKERS VANGUARD 50¢

No. 962 GCU C-701 30 July 2010

India

Down With Government War on Maoists, Tribal Peoples!

Indian Vanguard

AFP

Left: Mass rally of Maoist supporters in Hyderabad, September 2004. Right: In crackdown on Maoists, paramilitary troops arrest villagers in West Midnapore district, West Bengal, June 2009.

Only Workers Revolution Can Liberate the Indian Masses

In a military offensive that began late last year, the government of India has mobilized up to 100,000 heavily armed police backed by the army in an attempt to crush Maoist guerrilla forces in the country's eastern and central interior. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of the Congress Party, which leads the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) coalition regime, has called the insurgency led by the Communist Party of India (Maoist)—hereafter referred to as CPI (Maoist)—"the single biggest internal security challenge ever faced by our country." Government sources state that the Maoists are active in nearly a third of India's administrative districts, stretching from the northern border with Nepal south to Andhra Pradesh.

The offensive, dubbed Operation Green Hunt, has brought a bloody campaign of terror. One report described how:

> "Early one morning last October police forces surrounded the residents of Gompad, a remote village in the state of Chhattisgarh in eastern India, and attacked. Sixteen people were killed, including an older couple and their 25-year-old daughter, who was stabbed in the head with a knife and had her breasts sliced off. Her 2-year-old son survived, but three of his fingers were chopped off.... The cops suspected the villagers of sympathizing with Maoist insurgents, believing that some were informants."
>
> —Megha Bahree, "India's Dirty War," forbes.com, 10 May

For all the hype about India becoming an economic superpower, the intense poverty suffered by most of the population has been made worse by the neoliberal reforms instituted by the country's rulers starting in 1991. While a small layer of capitalists has accrued immense profits, the working class and urban and rural poor have been hit by savage cuts to public spending and the dismantling of price supports for agricultural products. Land dispossession and debt peonage led to at least 183,000 peasant suicides from 1997 to 2007—one every 30 minutes. Tens of millions of displaced peasants have migrated to the cities where most live in fetid slums. Poverty is so entrenched that more than 40 percent of India's children under the age of five suffer from malnutrition.

The Maoists' base of support is among the roughly 80 million adivasi (tribal) people, the poorest and most dispossessed population in all of India. Tribal villages in the forests and jungles have almost no schools or hospitals, or access to modern sanitation. The literacy rate is less than 25 percent, and only 14 percent for women, while malnutrition is rampant. The CPI (Maoist) has a record of defending the adivasi population against rapacious landlords and brutal police incursions. On April 6, they successfully ambushed a heavily armed patrol, killing 76 paramilitary cops.

Five years ago, the state government in Chhattisgarh set up a vigilante outfit called the Salwa Judum ("peace hunt") to forcibly depopulate hundreds of tribal villages, claiming this was for economic development. Salwa Judum mobs financed by the Tata and Essar industrial conglomerates, who seek to grab huge swaths of the area's land and resources, burned down homes and interned tens of thousands in squalid detention camps. Such actions only produced deeper revulsion toward the authorities and increased support for the Maoists. Now the Indian rulers are expanding their attacks into an all-out war. Their goal is to bring the tribal districts back under central control, which would allow for the forcible seizure of land and the handing over of vast mineral riches to Indian and international corporations.

This area has immense untapped resources including rich reserves of iron ore, coal and limestone as well as bauxite deposits worth an estimated *$4 trillion*—more than three times India's entire annual gross domestic product. As prominent Indian author Arundhati Roy commented in an insightful article in *Outlook India* (9 November 2009):

> "Right now in central India, the Maoists' guerrilla army is made up almost entirely of desperately poor tribal people living in conditions of such chronic hunger that it verges on famine of the kind we only associate with sub-Saharan Africa....
>
> "If the tribals have taken up arms, they have done so because a government which has given them nothing but violence and neglect now wants to snatch away the last thing they have—their land. Clearly, they do not believe the government when it says it only wants to 'develop' their region. Clearly, they do not believe that the roads as wide and flat as aircraft runways that are being built through their forests in Dantewada by the National Mineral Development Corporation are being built for them to walk their children to school on. They believe that if they do not fight for their land, they will be annihilated."

Soon after its reelection in May 2009,

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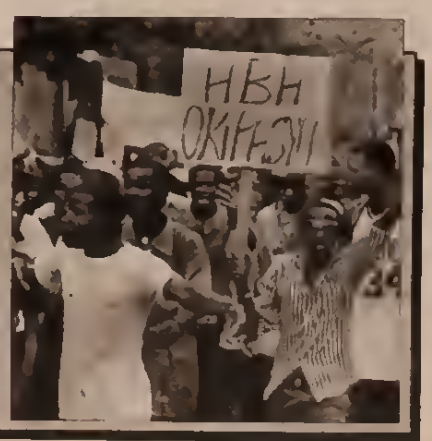
All U.S./UN Troops Out!

Haiti: Mass Misery Under Imperialist Occupation...3



Ruffling Feathers: An Editorial Comment

On Quacks and Their Defenders

Rarely has a subject elicited such a vehement reaction from our readership as our articles "Medical Science vs. Homeopathy" (*WV* No. 947, 20 November 2009), "Capitalist Reaction and Anti-Vaccine Hysteria" (*WV* No. 948, 4 December 2009) and "Defend Simon Singh! Defend Scientific Medicine!" (*WV* No. 949, 1 January). *WV* was deluged by so many letters that we could not possibly publish all of them. With the exception of one letter (printed at right), all took issue with our blanket denunciation of medical quackery—homeopathy, acupuncture, chiropractic, "New Age" spiritualism, herbal remedies, naturopathy—and our intransigent defense of science-based medicine and its accomplishments, such as vaccinations.

As we noted in *WV* No. 947 in regard to snake-oil "medicine": "While some of these treatments may be relatively harmless and may sometimes have a placebo effect, more often they are dangerous both in themselves and because they divert patients from needed medical treatment." Of the letters that defended quackery outright, one grotesquely claimed that AIDS is spreading because of a lack of selenium in the soils of southern Africa and defended homeopathy as "hard science" and chiropractic as "a great American invention."

A few writers tried to put defense of their chosen snake oil in a more rationalist light. A letter by B.B. in Atlanta correctly noted that "all attempts should be made to protect the scientific community from anti-science hysteria" but also condemned attempts to vaccinate the population against the H1N1 virus, which he called a "hoax." T.S. wrote that we should support the "methods of science" while also favorably quoting New Age health guru Gary Null, an HIV-denialist who promotes chiropractic and homeopathy and pushes "nutritional" methods to treat AIDS in place of antiretroviral drugs. When South Africa's former president Thabo Mbeki carried out a similar policy, it resulted in the needless deaths of an estimated 300,000 people.

As a Marxist organization, we do not purport to have particular expertise in medical science. But the issue at hand goes to the defense of science itself, and of Marxism's dialectical materialist worldview, against religious obscurantism, mysticism and all anti-scientific outlooks.

While scientists must test their theories to ensure that they are rooted in material reality, quacks by definition resist rigorous testing because their practices are based at bottom on religious or other mystical dogmas (subluxation for chiropractors, *qi* for acupuncturists, etc.). This is not to say that medical science still does not have a great deal to learn and a long way to go in the treatment of diseases. The marriage of the art of medicine and science is historically recent and incomplete. We fight to *expand* scientific understanding against the quacks who exploit gaps in that understanding to peddle their wares. Science-based medicine cannot perform miracles. But it must be defended against the alternatives.

The letters we received that argued for "alternative medicine" had a common theme: that "mainstream" medicine cannot be trusted because it is profit-driven and therefore hopelessly corrupt. Under capitalism, medicine is driven by both profit and social utility. We certainly do not claim that the American Medical Association primarily cares about patients or that the pharmaceutical giants are benignly concerned about people's health needs. Indeed, many of the problems in the U.S. health care system do stem from the drive for profit. But this is not a question of the scientific method but of the social system in which science operates. As we wrote in *WV* No. 947:

> "Medicine for profit rations health care by class, race, sex and ethnicity, reserving the best care for the wealthy. The capitalist class can largely be blamed for the gullibility of the public: high costs place health care beyond the reach of many, and out of despair, many turn to something that promises miracles. Contributing to this problem is ignorance of the principles of science on the part of a

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Letter

On Anti-Vaccine Hysteria

WV received the following undated letter on February 1.

Dear Comrades,

I am writing concerning your article, "Capitalist Reaction and Anti-Vaccine Hysteria." I found the article to be accurate and informative.

I would like to point out a few things that confirm the accuracy of your article.

In the article you mentioned that vaccine development is covered by "eye dropper" funding while if you say terrorism then it is funded by the billions. I can see that here in Boston where we had to wait for flu vaccines. Meanwhile, however, the federal government is funding a biosafety lab level 4 in a working class neighborhood. This facility will contain pathogens that are deadly and mostly incurable (see enclosed pamphlet).

You also mentioned that there is religious opposition to young girls receiving the HPV vaccine. While this is true it is also true that the HPV vaccine is beneficial to men as well in that the virus can cause colorectal cancer in gay men. Also most women get the virus from infected straight men.

You are also correct in your conclusion in that only in a healthy socialist society will the needs of humanity be taken care of instead of profit and superstitiousness.

Alan N.

TROTSKY

Revolutionary Perspective for India

The founding document of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India (BLPI), written while India was under British rule, emphasized the proletariat's unique capacity to lead all the exploited and oppressed in the struggle for their emancipation. Applying the Trotskyist perspective of permanent revolution, the BLPI program stressed the fight for the political independence of the proletariat from the Indian bourgeoisie, which is today, as under colonial rule, a counterrevolutionary force beholden to imperialism.

LENIN

The leadership of the revolution, which the peasantry cannot provide for itself, can come only from an urban class. But the Indian bourgeoisie cannot possibly provide this leadership, since in the first place, it is reactionary through and through on the land question itself, sharing as it does so largely in the parasitic exploitation of the peasantry. Above all, the bourgeoisie, on account of its inherent weakness and dependence on Imperialism itself, is destined to play a counter-revolutionary role in the coming struggle for power.

The leadership of the peasantry in the coming petty bourgeois democratic agrarian revolution that is immediately posed can therefore come only from the industrial proletariat, and an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry is [a] fundamental pre-requisite of the Indian revolution. This alliance cannot be conceived in the form of a "Workers' and Peasants' Party" or of a "democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants" in the revolution. It is impossible so to fuse within a single party or a dictatorship the policies of two classes whose interests only partially coincide and are bound to come into conflict sooner or later. The revolutionary alliance between the proletariat and peasantry can mean only proletarian *leadership* of the peasant struggle and, in case of revolutionary victory, the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship with the support of the peasantry....

Despite its subjective weakness in organization and consciousness, inevitable in a backward country and in the conditions of repression surrounding it, the working class is entirely capable of leading the Indian revolution. It is [the] only class objectively fitted for this role, not only in relation to the Indian situation, but in view of the decline of capitalism on [a] world scale, which opens the road to the international proletarian revolution. The proletariat needs above all to develop its own independent political party, free from the influence of the bourgeoisie, and armed with the weapons of revolutionary Marxism, to lead it not only in the day to day struggles but above all in the coming revolution. Without such a party the proletariat must fail in its historic task of leading the masses of India to revolutionary victory.

—"Draft Programme of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India" (1942), reprinted in Charles Wesley Ervin, *Tomorrow Is Ours: The Trotskyist Movement in India and Ceylon, 1935-48* (2006)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is July 27.

No. 962 **30 July 2010**

Polanski Wins, Witchhunters Lose

In a victory against the forces of social reaction, on July 12 the Swiss government declared renowned film director Roman Polanski a free man, rejecting a U.S. request to extradite him. Polanski, a French citizen, fled the U.S. for Paris in 1978, having faced multiple felony charges for having had consensual sex with Samantha Geimer, a sexually experienced 13-year-old. After pleading guilty to "unlawful sexual intercourse" with a minor, Polanski served six weeks in prison for "diagnostic testing" and was then threatened with more prison time before he fled. For more than three decades, he has been the target of a vicious, puritanical vendetta whose agents range from U.S. police forces to many liberals and bourgeois feminists. Arrested in Zurich last September, the 76-year-old Polanski spent two months in jail and seven more under house arrest before the ruling by the Swiss Justice Ministry.

Reuters

July 17: Roman Polanski arrives at Montreux Jazz Festival after being freed from house arrest.

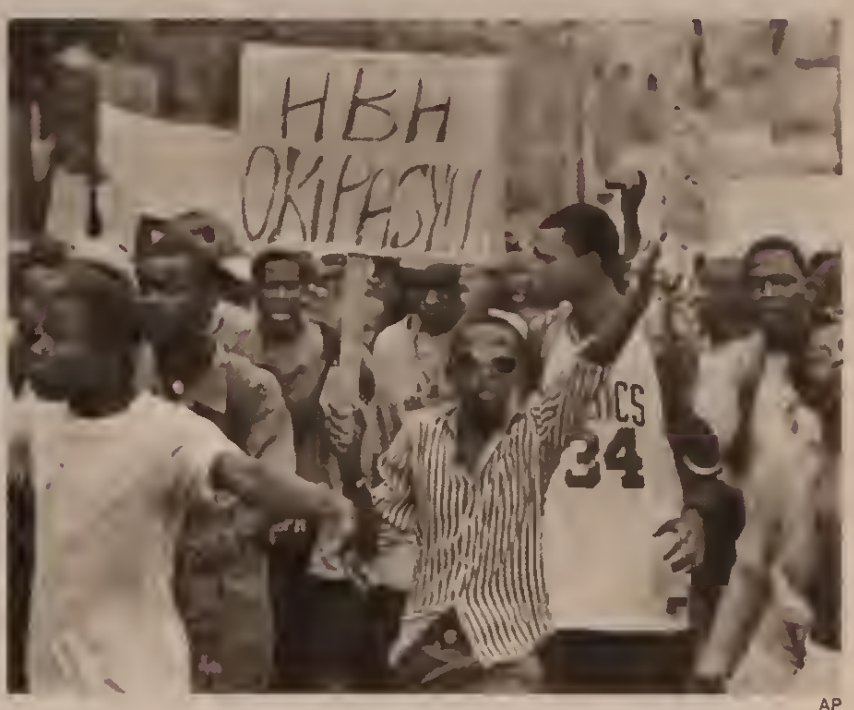
In a July 17 Swiss TV interview, Polanski thanked the many people "who kept sending me messages of support during those nine long months." From the beginning, the Spartacist League has been virtually alone on the U.S. left in defending Polanski. We wrote in "Stop the Puritan Witchhunt Against Roman Polanski!" (*WV* No. 192, 10 February 1978; reprinted in *WV* No. 944, 9 October 2009) that what was "genuinely 'tawdry' and sordid about the Polanski case is not the actual incident itself, but the vile official persecution and the hideous hypocrisy of it all." The article went on:

> "As communists we oppose attempts to fit human sexuality into legislated or decreed 'norms.' The guiding principle for sexual relations between people should be that of effective consent—that is, nothing more than mutual agreement and understanding as opposed to coercion. We hold that any and all consensual relations between individuals are purely their own concern, and the state has no business interfering in human sexual activity."

As much as we are cheered by this brilliant director and Holocaust survivor's victory over his persecutors, we note that Polanski still faces an Interpol warrant in effect for 188 countries. A Los Angeles Superior Court spokesman has warned that Polanski could be arrested and sent back to the U.S. if he travels to another country that has an extradition deal with the U.S. *Witchhunters: Keep your hands off Roman Polanski!*■

Haiti: Mass Misery Under Imperialist Occupation

Fremson/NY Times



AP

Left: Hundreds of families live in shanties on median strip in Port-au-Prince six months after earthquake. Right: Protesters in front of National Palace demand that UN forces leave and President René Préval resign, May 25.

All U.S./UN Troops Out!

In the six months since the devastating earthquake struck the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince, killing some 250,000 people and destroying 100,000 homes, the suffering of the Haitian masses has only deepened. A week after the quake, imperialist occupiers led by the U.S. signaled what they had in store for the Haitian masses when police in a joint UN-Haitian operation fired into crowded prison cells in the southern city of Les Cayes, killing at least 12.

While the last of the 20,000 U.S. troops that were dispatched to Haiti in the guise of a "relief effort" have been withdrawn, 500 American National Guardsmen are stationed there. The country remains under military occupation by the UN force known as MINUSTAH, which has run Haiti since 2004. Headed by the Brazilian military, more than 10,000 UN troops and police are imposing "order" on a starving, homeless population, brutally repressing social protest and rebuilding the machinery of repression on behalf of Haiti's imperialist masters.

The earthquake's death toll was itself a product of over a century of imperialist depredation that left the country totally exposed to the quake's impact, as shoddily built buildings in the teeming city collapsed. Today, some 1.5 million people are still living in makeshift tents—often no more than four sticks and bedsheets—in camps in and around the capital. With virtually no means of transport, many of these people are hours from the city center. In this utterly impoverished country, where the unemployment rate reached as high as 80 percent before the quake, this means that few have even the hope of being able to find any work.

People who had sought refuge on golf courses, parks or other facilities were forcibly relocated to barren land where there are no basic services like water and sanitation, where the dust and heat are unbearable and where a strong wind could easily destroy their shelters. More than 1,200 families camped in the Sylvio Cator soccer stadium had their tents destroyed without warning by the Haitian National Police and were moved out at gunpoint. People are in deadly fear of the hurricane season, with many living precariously on eroded hillsides that could easily be wiped out by a mudslide. Only a few of the promised hurricane-resistant shelters have been built. Other people have fled to the abject poverty of the countryside.

Reuters

February 1: U.S. troops push through crowds of desperate people waiting for food coupons in downtown Port-au-Prince.

Some elements associated with the occupation have swooped down like vultures to reap the spoils of "reconstruction." In the town of Ganthier, 18 miles east of the capital, private developers have laid claim to state land that has been used to grow food for 80 years, driving peasants off with bulldozers. Those who resisted were beaten and arrested, along with the mayor.

The Haitian Parliament has officially ceded power over aid money and reconstruction to the Interim Commission for the Reconstruction of Haiti, headed by Bill Clinton, placing control of what most of what little industrial production had existed. The "development" that Clinton & Co. talk about centers on expanding garment and other sweatshop production. Workers in those shops are paid starvation wages, often less than the official minimum salary of roughly $3 a day.

Half a year after the quake, only some 2 percent of pledged reconstruction aid has been delivered and less than 5 percent of the rubble has been removed. Aid was never the point of the U.S. intervention into Haiti. The International Executive Committee of the International Communist League issued an April 27 statement repudiating our initial position justifying the U.S. imperialist troop presence as essential to aid, a social-patriotic betrayal of Marxist principle. We wrote: "The U.S. military invasion was designed to provide a 'humanitarian' face-lift to bloody U.S. imperialism and was aimed at securing U.S. military control in Haiti and reasserting American imperialist domination over the Caribbean" (*WV* No. 958, 7 May).

U.S. military authorities who took command of the Port-au-Prince airport prevented the World Food Program from landing cargos of food, medicine and water for two days, diverting their flights "so that the United States could land troops and equipment, and lift Americans and other foreigners to safety" (*New York Times*, 17 January). At the same time, the Obama administration ordered a naval blockade to prevent Haitians from fleeing to the U.S., with Air Force flights broadcasting a Creole-language warning from Haiti's ambassador to the U.S. that American forces would "intercept" anyone fleeing by boat and "send you back home."

We demand an end to the UN occupation of Haiti and call for all imperialist troops and police forces out now! We call for full citizenship rights for all Haitians and other refugees and immigrants who have made it to the U.S. No deportations!

Neocolonial Haiti: Subjugation and Devastation

For 200 years, the Haitian masses have been paying in blood for the revolution carried out under Toussaint L'Ouverture against the French colonial slavocracy. Culminating in the creation of the first independent black state in the modern era, the Haitian Revolution inspired slave revolts across the Americas and met with a frenzy of racist hostility from both France and the then-slaveowning U.S. In return for recognition by France, Haiti was compelled to compensate the former slaveowners in an amount measuring $20 billion at today's prices. The country remains hideously impoverished to this day.

The occupation this January was the fourth carried out by the U.S. in the past century. U.S. troops occupied Haiti from 1915-1934, drowning an anti-imperialist revolt in blood. The U.S. installed and then propped up a series of brutal, corrupt dictatorships, most infamously that of François "Papa Doc" Duvalier beginning in 1957. Duvalier organized the Tonton Macoutes paramilitary thugs and oversaw the killing of 50,000 of his opponents. The bloodletting continued under his son "Baby

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NOTICE

***Workers Vanguard* skips alternate issues in June, July and August.**

Our next issue will be dated August 27.

In Honor of Comrade Joe Verret

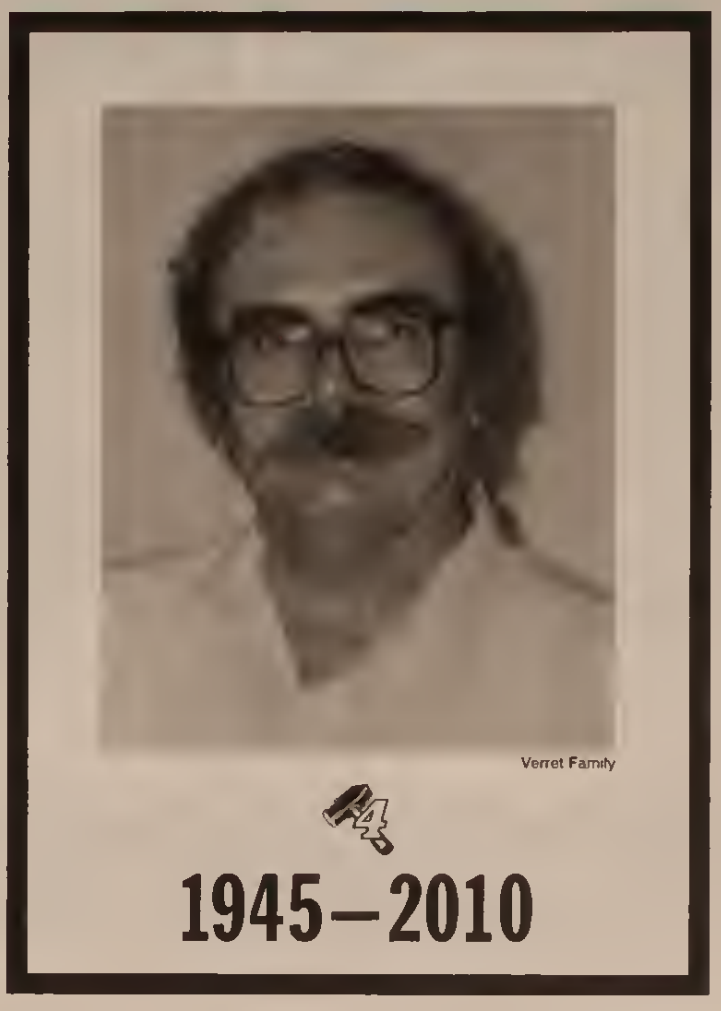
Founding Member of Spartacist League

Our comrade Joe Verret died from leukemia in Los Angeles on March 30. He was a founding member of the Spartacist League in 1966 and a respected leading cadre of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). A memorial meeting in his honor was held in Los Angeles on June 12. A salute from the Chicago Local stressed that he would be "missed by those comrades who never even met him but have benefited from his interventions through the years. Joe was of the generation of Southern young white radicals who 'defied Dixie' and found their way to revolutionary Marxism."

A native of New Orleans, Joe was motivated deeply by the need to fight for a third American revolution that would open the road to black freedom in an egalitarian socialist society. In the Deep South under Dixiecrat rule, Joe carried out our work under some of the most difficult circumstances an American communist could face. To this day, the open shop South is a bastion of racist reaction and a sword of Damocles over labor's struggles.

Joe was at the core of our Southern perspectives for many years but was not the least provincial. His voracious intellectual appetite was renowned. As Bob from Paris wrote, recalling a time when he and Joe were comrades in Britain, whatever Joe read "became the subject of often wide-ranging discussions with other comrades regarding all questions human. The fact he took an interest in so many questions encouraged us to do so too." Joe played a leading role in establishing the Spartacist League/Britain and made the main political presentation to its 1978 founding conference. Patrick, who worked with Joe in London in the early years, wrote to us of Joe's "determination and strength of character." During a scare campaign against the Irish Republican Army, Patrick was fired from his job in London, and Joe was eager to pursue the fight against his victimization. Patrick stated, "He knew racism when he saw it."

Although Joe left our organization in 2000, he continued to work with comrades through the Prometheus Research Library. He also became, increasingly, a valued mentor for younger comrades of the L.A. Local. As the PRL Librarian observed, Joe was an enormous piece of party history wrapped up in one man. At the memorial, Barry, who worked with Joe for many years, noted that in Joe's collaborations with *Workers Vanguard*, he sought to highlight contradictions and changes in social reality. In his last contribution ("Notes on New Orleans," *WV* No. 955, 26 March), Joe underlined how the military/police clampdown on New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina exposed the brutal, racist reality behind the facade of bourgeois democracy.



Verret Family

1945–2010

WV Photo

Gloria Verret addressing June 12 memorial meeting in Los Angeles.

As Joe's longtime friend and comrade Corky wrote, "Joe left the organization for a time, but we and Joe were able to reconcile and he contributed, in spite of his illness, to *WV* and gave some internal classes to the organization. So Joe died as both he and we would have it—a Trotskyist." We reprint below excerpts from the speeches by Gene Herson, Joe's wife Gloria Verret, and comrades Reuben, Benny and Carla.

Gene Herson: We are here today to remember and honor our comrade Joe Verret, a revolutionary, a founding member of the Spartacist League and a leading cadre of our organization from the day he joined in 1965.

Joe was a fighter—politically as a revolutionary and personally. He fought to the end, enduring multiple bone marrow transplants and a final round of chemo in an effort to see his daughter, Jasmine, graduate from high school this June. His death after a four-year battle with leukemia is a grave loss for our party.

It is difficult to capture the breadth and experience of this comrade. He could be patient and understanding, a good and careful listener, and he could be rock-hard politically and crusty and tenacious—even at times downright cantankerous. He came to be known in the party as the "ole Cajun alligator."

Joe was born in New Orleans on 11 December 1945. His father came out of Cajun country, picked peppers on the Avery Island plantation and was later a member of the CIO's Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers union, where he was involved in a 1947 strike where black workers played a leading role. Joe's dad's stories about being a union member in the open shop Jim Crow South made a deep impression.

Joe had immense capacity, and diverse interests. He was a communist and talented mathematician. He listened to all kinds of music and loved jazz. He was an enthusiastic cook, creating complicated and exotic dishes. And then there was his wicked sense of humor. Joe and Gloria were always gracious hosts. A teacher by profession, he was an educator in the party. From the time he joined, he helped recruit to the party many of the young people radicalized during the Vietnam War.

This was a time when youth in the U.S. were becoming radicalized in the midst of developments in the civil rights movement, growing opposition to the Vietnam War and the emergence of the New Left. Political organizations were breaking up, like the pro-Mao Progressive Labor Movement, later becoming Progressive Labor Party (PL), which originated in a split from the pro-Soviet Communist Party. And there were the split-offs of the Young People's Socialist League, the youth group of the reformist, anti-Communist, witch-hunting Socialist Party (SP).

Joe was a member of the American Socialist Organizing Committee (ASOC), a left split from the SP. Joe met comrades from the SL at an ASOC conference in Baltimore, I believe, and began corresponding from New Orleans. Joe understood the need to organize a revolutionary party based on the program of Trotskyism. This meant defending the gains of the Bolshevik-led Russian October Revolution. Joe was won over on the necessity to stand for the unconditional defense of deformed workers states like China and Cuba against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution and to fight for a workers political revolution to oust the anti-revolutionary bureaucracy whose policies endanger those gains and undermine revolution internationally. These were crucial lessons which grounded Joe as an effective revolutionary leader.

So during this period Joe rigorously studied these central political questions and became solid on the fundamentals of Marxism and Leninism, including the struggle by Leon Trotsky and the International Left Opposition against the degeneration of the Russian Revolution, presided over by Joseph Stalin with his anti-revolutionary dogma of "socialism in one country."

In 1965, Joe joined the Spartacists and continued to try to recruit the best ASOC members. At the same time, Joe was writing to the SL national office about the black protests going on in Bogalusa, Louisiana, and the Deacons for Defense and Justice, which organized armed self-defense patrols to protect civil rights workers and black neighborhoods against KKK terror. Joe knew firsthand that the civil rights movement was not just Martin Luther King's pacifism, as the bourgeois press and many left groups would propagate, so Joe offered to write an article about this which appeared in *Spartacist* ("Report from New Orleans," *Spartacist* No. 8, November-December 1966).

Meanwhile, ASOC was disintegrating, with disputes between various shades of "third campers," who considered capitalism and Stalinism as twin evils. On 26 April 1966, Joe resigned from ASOC with a statement declaring, "I HAVE JOINED SPARTACIST." That Labor Day in Chicago, Joe attended the founding conference of the Spartacist League and was elected an alternate member of our Central Committee. Joe went to work as the Spartacist organizer in New Orleans. But it was more like organizing and politically intervening in the entire Gulf region. In one letter to New York, Joe reported, "Arrived yesterday in Houston after four days spent in Austin at the SDS NC [Students for a Democratic Society National Committee] there. I plan to be back in New Orleans on Thursday, leaving there after a day or so for a SSOC [Southern Student Organizing Committee] high school conference in Atlanta, returning to New O. via Tallahassee."

Joe was well known and respected in the New Orleans left. Our small group was often involved in united-front defense work, including with black militants in the left wing of the Southern civil rights movement. There was one united-front defense protest with SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) in 1968 to protest the cop killing of a black youth, after the NAACP called off a planned march. The protest came on the heels of Martin Luther King's assassination and a massive police presence was expected. Our comrades contacted Charles Sims of the Deacons for Defense and requested assistance. Joe recalled in a class he gave to comrades here in Los Angeles: "It's us and SNCC and it's like hundreds of cops are circling the demonstration.... I don't think we would have done it without the Deacons; we would have just probably gotten beaten up."

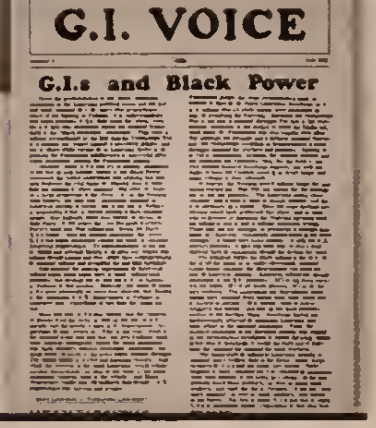
Joe's communist work in the South was dangerous. For over two years, beginning in 1966, the New Orleans Spartacist League local was infiltrated by three state

agents and informers, who did their best to get "evidence" that the SL was engaged in or advocated violent or illegal activities. But the 1967 Louisiana Joint Legislative Committee on Un-American Activities Report No. 9 on "The Spartacist League and Certain Other Communist Activities in South Louisiana" acknowledged that the agents had never heard anyone in our organization so much as joke about violence. This is a testimony to the scrupulous work conducted under Joe's leadership. An internal party circular at the time noted, "The report is not a bad recruiting pamphlet for us," as it shows us to be genuine Marxists committed to socialist revolution and working-class rule.

In August of 1967, the cops arrested three SL members, including a leading black woman comrade, Shirley, who was making a Southern tour, along with a friend. They were arrested under the Louisiana vagrancy law after returning from an all-night drive from Atlanta. The comrades were facing up to six months in jail and hundreds of dollars in fines. The SL mounted a defiant defense campaign, which was ultimately successful. Joe led the comrades in organizing defense efforts in this and other cases.

As the organizer of the branch, Joe was particularly targeted. He was physically attacked by an undercover cop at a campus snack bar, suffering a chipped tooth and broken glasses. Joe told L.A. comrades years later, "I can tell you that when I would get death threats, I would be afraid. I spent weeks checking around the hood of my car to make sure it hadn't been wired for bombs. But it's a question of how you manage your fear, and the party's program is what gives you the ability to manage that."

Verret Family



Joe in Vietnam with his books. Joe worked on *G.I. Voice*, newsletter initiated by Spartacist supporters in Army during Vietnam War.

During this period, Joe was intervening in an anti-Vietnam War group, one that was supposed to be open to all those who opposed the war. The pro-Mao Stalinist PL was also in this group, but could not defend its politics against the Spartacist League. PL resorted to Stalinist dirty tricks and organizational maneuvers to dodge the SL's Trotskyist program. When PL pulled a purge effort, Joe countered with a leaflet, "Moscow Trials in New Orleans," exposing PL. PL succeeded in purging the SL and converted the antiwar group into an organization ironically named the Movement for a Democratic Society, welcoming anarchists and other anti-Marxists.

Joe understood that recruiting to the party meant rigorous education and training. One comrade Joe recruited, who went on to do communist work in the United Auto Workers, recalled Joe training her and a crew of disparate youth. She wrote:

> "I don't know who else could have taken on the training and education of this unpromising and unlikely bunch. I personally had been a member of the I.S. [International Socialists] without ever seeing an I.S. newspaper, without reading a word of Lenin or Marx, never heard of Shachtman, and had no idea that the I.S. put a pox on both houses in the Vietnam War.
>
> "He assigned and laid out an ambitious syllabus of reading for our study group sessions. Soon, he even made us present and lead the discussions. He was an infinitely patient and challenging teacher. He was serious about building a Trotskyist party and managed to make us serious about it too."

Through all of this, Joe was also carrying out his work as a national leader on the SL Central Committee, keeping an eye on the work of the party and comrades around the country. Joe was elected to the Central Committee as a full member in 1969.

That same year, at the height of the Vietnam War, he was drafted into the Army. Joe followed the SL's policy laid out in "On Draft Resistance: You Will Go!" (*Spartacist* No. 11, March-April 1968). Counterposed to the largely student "hell no, we won't go!" protesters, as Marxists we joined our class brothers and sisters in the military to win them to our class-struggle program. Joe, along with other comrades, like Reuben who is here today, worked on the *G.I. Voice* newsletter beginning in 1969, urging soldiers to exercise their democratic right to protest against U.S. imperialism's dirty war. The publication was infused with a ***class*** analysis and connected the repression in the military with the oppression and exploitation of the working class and the oppression of blacks.

Photo of Joe carrying sign in support of Vietnamese Revolution, as it appeared in July 1967 State of Louisiana report.

Joint Legislative Committee on Un-American Activities

Joe, a well-known red, was ordered by the Army to keep redoing basic training in Louisiana ***for a year***! He told me a story about how two officers took him on a long drive to a remote part of the base in the bayous. He didn't know if he was coming back from this. After asking him some questions, they brought him back to his barracks. And he went when they shipped him to Vietnam for a six-month hitch. Just after he got there, his weapon was taken away and he was given a desk job.

Throughout his political life, Joe intervened on a broad range of domestic and international questions in the party. This included playing an important role in the party's work on the fight for black liberation. In 1974, at the Fourth National Conference of the Spartacist League, he served on the Black Commission. A year earlier, he had written a key document on the Russian question, focusing on guerrilla movements and the formation of the deformed workers states.

Joe was a member of the London Spartacist Group, which was set up in 1976. Joe played a leading role in the founding of the Spartacist League/Britain in 1978, giving the key report on building and transforming the section. Joe also played a prominent role in a 1985 internal party discussion on slogans against apartheid in South Africa.

In 1979, at our First International Conference, Joe was elected a full member of the International Executive Committee, the leading body of the international Spartacist tendency, now International Communist League. In the late '70s and early '80s he played a leading role in both our Canadian and British sections, including serving as National Chairman of the Trotskyist League of Canada. Joe's key fights in that section were "centrally against a narrow circle existence," as one comrade there recalled, and on the Russian question as Cold War II heated up. He was also a member of the Central Committee of the Spartacist League/Britain.

Joe was also stationed in the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand for several weeks in 1980 as a representative of the International Secretariat. John, who had been in our Austin branch and collaborated with Joe in the '60s, was in the Australian section when Joe got there and remembered Joe

> "taking apart a leaflet that the Melbourne Local wrote which we had thought was pretty good. The title was 'Hate Carter, Khomeini. Scabs.' Joe pointed out that in the United States such a title might not be a bad thing at the time. The problem here was that it was indistinguishable from the position of any good social democrat. I think his trip at that time was the key to the Australians [comrades] ***beginning*** to recognize that the main enemy of the Australian working class and oppressed is those who rule ***Australia***."

After further international work, Joe returned to the U.S. in 1981 and served on the SL/U.S. Political Bureau during his brief stay in our center.

Joe led our former Atlanta Local from 1983 until 1996. In Atlanta, he was part of the leadership of a Partisan Defense Committee-initiated labor/black mobilization to counter a Klan provocation against Martin Luther King Day on 21 January 1989. It was one of the hairiest actions I have been involved in. We brought out more of a crowd than we expected, but were *very* thin on marshals for maintaining order and security. Afterward, Joe and I had a drink together, just looked at each other and knew it could have gone very differently. Joe always had a hard-nosed sense of social reality in America, a product of being a communist fighter in the South.

In 1996, Joe transferred to Los Angeles, where he spent the rest of his life. Joe resigned from the SL in 2000, and this, I think, was unfortunate. The *way* this happened was unfortunate. I made it my business to get out to L.A. to say that to him in person before he died and also let him know that many other comrades felt that way. What disturbs me is the ***manner*** in which this was handled, even if the outcome would have been the same. But this has to be placed in political perspective. As the main resolution passed by the Thirteenth National Conference of the SL/U.S. stated:

> "The period that the SL/U.S. has confronted in the last decades is characterized by a dearth of class struggle and the proletariat's defeat with the counterrevolution in the USSR, which has resulted in a throwback in consciousness where communism is considered utopian at best. The party's internal struggles have reflected the impact of this reactionary period on us."

The Spartacist League is the longest continually existing revolutionary Marxist organization. We are going on 45 years as a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist-Trotskyist party dedicated to the emancipation of the working class and the oppressed by abolishing capitalism through worldwide workers revolution. Joe was a key part of this from the beginning.

The *Workers Vanguard* article on the conference ["Dog Days of the Post-Soviet Period," *WV* No. 948, 4 December 2009] made the point that "In the past period we have certainly made errors, which we struggle to understand and correct without demonizing comrades." The point is to approach political questions based on an objective assessment of the concretes and reality and on a programmatic basis. When I last talked with Joe, this was his disposition.

After he resigned, Joe continued to work with the Prometheus Research Library. Then, as a sympathizer, he became increasingly close to the party again. He contributed to and tried to correct *Workers Vanguard* articles. He was an especially valued mentor to the Los Angeles comrades. In April 2009, recognizing Joe's lifelong contributions and commitment to the SL, the Political Bureau voted him an honorary member of the SL/U.S.

Joe's death is a loss for our small revolutionary party. But we have gained a great deal from his contributions, which we can build on, making our party stronger to help our cause of building a revolutionary workers party as a section of a reforged Fourth International—the cause to which he dedicated his life.

Gloria Verret: I want to thank everybody for the tributes around the country. I'm glad a lot of people got to visit Joe while he was still talking. The L.A. branch has my gratitude because I was working full-time and I have a daughter. And if I ever couldn't do something, the organizer here and the comrades here did it. Most of all, thank you for bringing him back into the party. Despite the debilitating deterioration of the cancer, it gave him purpose; he was able to write, produce, be a part of the bigger picture that he never left in his heart.

Joe was a very shy man. Only in the party did his true colors come out, where he could be the fierce man he was. This is where he really lived his life. We would still have a lot of fun, we traveled a lot and had a lot of adventures. There are pictures over there of some of our beach trips. He never stuck his toe in the

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Joe Verret...

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water, hardly, but he loved to be on the edge of it and loved cooking for people. The nurses at work are sad for me and for them because I used to bring all of the leftovers. Joe cooked not for two people; he cooked for 20 people.

He also introduced me to culture because I am from South Dakota and I had none, either. He took me to the opera, the ballet. For 17 of our years we were parents to Jasmine, the light of our lives. He was an awesome dad from the very beginning.

We had some wild adventures. When we got married, there are some pictures of us—I am covered with champagne. He actually spent his wedding night next to [comrade] Kevin, who passed out next to him. Then there was the time in New York where we had our moving crew pack up all of our worldly belongings and we took them out to dinner in gratitude. And the people that stole our truck were also grateful that we packed it up nicely; they drove off to the New Jersey Turnpike. We found it later. There was a time in Chicago when he sat up bolt upright in the middle of the night holding his ear, which had been bloodied by a huge rat. I always thanked him for taking the hit that night.

One of the last things he said the week before he fell and had to go to the hospital was, "We had a good run, didn't we?" And we did. The last four years were pretty rough. He was a fighter and underwent a lot. He went from about 230 to 150 in weight. He went from a 60-year-old working man who loved teaching and wanted to cook—he looked 90.

Joe never gave up hope that he could get back to his life—working, teaching. The thing I can get some comfort from is that he had written things for *WV* at the end. He was participating in his mind despite his body being ravaged. Whatever he went through, whenever he was in delirium, I would always say: do you know who I am? And he would say, yes, you are my sweetie. He always remembered me and he would always remember Jasmine and his dog.

Spartacist Canada photo

Joe at Trotskyist League of Canada's Fourth National Conference, September 1980.

The next day, when I stopped by his place with comrade Sheri, we talked about the upcoming labor/black history class on the '30s. As originally conceived, the class was light on the black question. Joe was full of ideas for the class, so I called Don, who was giving it, handed my cell to Joe while his dog Zoey took me out for a spin. When I got back the phone was hot, the battery was dead and the class was the better for it.

At the fresh grave of the Georgian Bolshevik and Left Oppositionist Kote Tsintsadze, Trotsky contrasted to the West the harsh conditions that forged the Bolsheviks of the East—and, one might add, the American Deep South—concluding:

> "The revolutionary begins where personal ambition is fully and wholly subordinated to the service of a great idea, voluntarily submitting to and merging with it.... His was the ambition of unshakable revolutionary loyalty. It should serve as a lesson to the proletarian youth."

Benny: It is going on 37 years since I first met Joe Verret. By 1973 I'd spent three years as a student and anti-Vietnam War activist in the San Francisco Bay Area. It was a time of the Black Panther Party and the Chicano Power movement. I spent it learning from the Spartacist League. That year my brother-in-law, Jim, and I ventured on a five-month road trip. Our return route to California was through the South and New Orleans. The New York Spartacist local put us in contact with Joe. What I remember first was Joe taking us to one of his favorite restaurants for gumbo! I remember him smiling and laughing a lot that night. In those few days Joe gave us a thumbnail sketch of New Orleans politics and of jazz music.

Driving through Louisiana and having Joe explain New Orleans was unique. Between the late '60s and 1973 was a short span of time. But, being young and from the West Coast, one could artificially think that the civil rights movement had resolved social and legal inequalities. What I naively considered "the past" and "history" about the South was looking me in the face: broad swaths of land with blacks in overalls working them. These may not have been the plantations of yesteryear but it wasn't "the past" looking me in the eye—it was the legacy of Jim Crow! The entire experience gave me clarity of political outlook as to what Joe and the Spartacist League were fighting for—what in revolutionary politics is known as the black question, the question of social revolution.

Joe and I found ourselves in Los Angeles in the fall of 1975. We all came to indulge in following jazz music together. The young black comrades introduced us to the great jazz pianist Horace Tapscott. After maybe two years, Joe left L.A. and returned again in the mid '90s. Again, Joe made important contributions as part of local discussion on the changing demographics in L.A. with the growth of the Latino and Asian populations. Joe wrote: "L.A. is a really weird place relative to the rest of the U.S. The ghettoization of blacks is more intense than any other big city I know. In every sphere of social/political life the black question is buried."

The ruling class in America faced in Joseph Verret an ardent enemy of class exploitation, with the intellect and ability to assist in putting the bourgeoisie out of business.

Carla: Joe was my comrade who was able to educate me as a Marxist in Atlanta and shaped the first ten years of my political life as a communist. In Atlanta, we fought the lingering weight of the Martin Luther King legacy in the civil rights struggle and the emerging "talented tenth" toadies that became the black elected officialdom in the wake of the civil rights movement's defeat. We fought to recruit the best elements from historically black institutions, and elite institutions like Emory, with marginal success. We were the main axis of party intervention from Mississippi to Tennessee and Florida to North Carolina, and we generated propaganda and reportage drawing from our work from the Savannah longshore docks to the coal mines of Alabama. Joe was uniquely capable of guiding such a broad scope of work.

Three years after leaving Atlanta, the lessons learned there came in handy in establishing a station of Spartacist comrades in Johannesburg, South Africa, where neo-apartheid capitalism has entrenched the African National Congress nationalist regime, with South African Communist Party (SACP) Stalinists as their bloc partners. It was Joe who had already given me a primer on the origins of the SACP, the dynamics of the struggle for national liberation in South Africa, as well as in India.

I have not forgotten the demanding effort of maintaining a local collective at great distance from other locals and the comradeship we shared, through internal fights and struggles. We cooked together; we held barbecues and shared books and music and laughed quite often.

We succeeded in organizing a 3,500-strong demonstration in less than two weeks with limited forces against Ku Klux Klan lynch rope terror in downtown Atlanta, when they threatened the MLK holiday in 1989. We were able to do this because we had each learned the power of black and red, our program for mobilizing the multiracial working class in defense of blacks and all the oppressed as a cornerstone of the struggle for socialist revolution. It affirmed for many comrades that even under difficult conditions, with a clear program and a dedicated cadre, we will make inroads into the working class and lead numbers far greater than ourselves. Joe was a good teacher.■

WV Photos

Left: Joe (left) in New York Spartacist contingent in El Salvador demonstration, November 1981. Right: Joe in Atlanta picket against racist discrimination at Denny's restaurants, July 1993.

Verret Family

Joe with his daughter Jasmine at L.A.'s Griffith Observatory.

Quacks...

(continued from page 2)

> population stripped of access to decent public education."

Under the Obama administration's health care "reform," the very insurance giants that have made U.S. health costs the highest on the planet will be raking in even more money by ripping off working people. Meanwhile, an estimated 23 million people will not be able to afford any health insurance by 2019, in addition to millions of "illegal" immigrants who are barred from receiving any benefits. The labor movement should be in the forefront of the struggle for free, quality health care for all. We fight for socialized medicine—the expropriation of the parasitic health care and drug companies—as part of the struggle for a workers government.

It is quite trendy to rage against "Big Pharma" and to turn to "natural," "organic" and "holistic" foods, cures and lifestyles as some kind of alternative. Note, however, that the alternative medicine industry is no less driven by profit. It is, in fact, a very lucrative market: Americans spent more than $23 billion on vitamin, herbal and other supplements in 2007. More than a third of Americans use "therapies" like acupuncture, homeopathy, chiropractic and "traditional" healing methods. None of these treatments require FDA approval or any kind of certification of safety or effectiveness to be commercialized. Big Pharma is, in fact, a big player in "alternative medicine." Some of the same companies that mass-produce drugs in huge chemical labs also churn out vitamin and herbal pills sold in bottles with rainbows, sunrises and flowers on their labels. Pharmaceutical giants Wyeth, Bayer HealthCare, Unilever, Novartis and GlaxoSmithKline all make or sell supplements.

Indeed, this business is so big and profitable that a number of legitimately degreed doctors and scientists prostitute their credentials to promote anti-science nonsense. The notion that vaccines cause autism was given a veneer of scientific credibility by Andrew Wakefield, a prestigious doctor from a prestigious British hospital, in a 1988 study published in the reputable medical review *The Lancet*. His study was funded by a lawyer's office conducting a lawsuit against a vaccine manufacturer. As the baseless rumor linking autism to measles-mumps-rubella vaccines spread throughout Britain, child vaccination rates plummeted to below 70 percent in some areas, and the country suffered waves of measles outbreaks. Twelve years after the article appeared, *The Lancet* issued a full retraction of the study. In May, Wakefield was stripped of the right to practice medicine by Britain's General Medical Council.

Religious obscurantism and anti-scientific superstition were given an enormous boost by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union. With bourgeois ideologues claiming that socialism is a failed experiment, and even that class struggle itself is a thing of the past, disaffection with capitalist society can take on strange colorations. Many who fear imminent ecological disaster, for instance, turn to reactionary "zero growth" and "back to nature" schemes, all the while chatting on their computers about the evils of technology.

Our defense of science—and of the gains of the bourgeois Enlightenment in general—is intimately linked to our fight for new October Revolutions. Under an internationally planned collectivized economy, massive resources would be invested in scientific research and the means would be developed to ensure that everyone receives quality medical treatment in a timely manner.

Health also means a decent place to live, good nutrition, education in human biology, clean air, safe and decent working conditions. The capitalist profit system cannot provide this—whether in the advanced industrial countries or in the neocolonial countries of the Third World, where masses languish in hunger and dire poverty and are cut off from anything resembling modern health care. The means of production have to be ripped out of the hands of the greedy capitalist class through world socialist revolution—the only road to building a society where scientific research, technological development and all the productive forces would be put to the service of all of humanity.■

Haiti...

(continued from page 3)

Doc," who went on to face a popular revolt that caused him to flee the country in 1986, when others in his cabal took over.

The massive social discontent eventually led to the election of radical populist priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide, champion of the Lavalas movement, by a two-thirds majority in 1990. Virtually the entire left internationally gave this bourgeois politician political support. In contrast, we warned: "Aristide will either play the role of groveling instrument of the Haitian bourgeoisie and the U.S. imperialist overlords or he will be swept away in a reactionary crackdown aimed at decisively disciplining the pitilessly oppressed population" (*WV* No. 517, 4 January 1991). In fact, both things happened.

While the Aristide government tried to carry out such reforms as raising the miserable minimum wage, as a bourgeois regime it served the class interests of the ruling elite of sweatshop owners and landowners and their imperialist patrons. Before his election Aristide often denounced U.S. imperialism's role in Haiti. But once in office he welcomed USAID and IMF assistance, boasting that he would "restore the World Bank's confidence in Haiti."

Seven months after taking office, Aristide was overthrown by the man he appointed as military chief, Raoul Cedras, who established a regime of military terror and forced Aristide into exile. Some 2,000 people were killed in the immediate aftermath. Thousands fled to the U.S. in rickety boats only to be imprisoned in Guantánamo. In 1994, following a starvation embargo imposed by the U.S. under Clinton, American Marines invaded the country and reinstalled Aristide at bayonet point.

The condition for Aristide's return was that he agree to a drastic austerity program, privatization of state-owned industry, massive layoffs in the public sector and the virtual abolition of import tariffs. All this he did, inducing the collapse of Haiti's economy while setting the police, supplemented by gangs, against strikers and others. Nonetheless, his Washington overlords were not satisfied. After an interim regime under René Préval—the current nominal president—Aristide was re-elected in 2000 only to face a U.S.-led destabilization campaign. To Washington's chagrin, Aristide developed ties with the Cuban deformed workers state, which has provided crucial medical personnel for Haiti, and with Venezuela under bourgeois populist Hugo Chávez. In 2004, "peacekeeping" troops led mainly by the U.S., Canada and France landed in Haiti and Aristide was whisked out on a U.S.-chartered jet to the Central African Republic. (He later moved to South Africa.)

Ever since the 2004 coup, the UN's MINUSTAH troops have backed violent assaults by the Haitian police on poor communities and on demonstrations demanding Aristide's return. UN forces have participated in a number of "anti-gang" raids on Cité Soleil, an Aristide bastion, and other slum neighborhoods in Port-au-Prince. Attacks in December 2004 and December 2006, with hundreds of troops moving into Cité Soleil by land, sea and air, left scores of residents dead. During hunger riots in 2008, UN troops fired on crowds, killing several demonstrators.

The imperialist intervention undertaken by the Obama White House shored up this bloody occupation force while also demonstrating to the world that the U.S. continues to regard the Caribbean basin as an "American lake." Under both George W. Bush and Barack Obama, the U.S. has expanded its military presence in Colombia, where there are now seven U.S. bases. The government of Costa Rica this month authorized the entry of 46 U.S. warships and 7,000 Marines, while the U.S.-backed government in Honduras opened a new base for American use in April. The U.S. military buildup in the region is a particular threat to the Cuban bureaucratically deformed workers state. We defend Cuba unconditionally against U.S. imperialism while fighting for a proletarian political revolution against the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy. We demand: All U.S. military forces and bases out of the Caribbean! U.S. out of Guantánamo! U.S. imperialists: Hands off the world!

Anger at Occupation Grows

Thousands of Haitians fed up by foreign occupation and Préval's puppet government have staged protests recently in the face of brutal repression. Demonstrations in May in Port-au-Prince brought out an estimated 30,000 people demanding free elections, a role in reconstruction efforts and the return of Aristide. Demonstrators have also called for ending the ban of his Fanmi Lavalas party, which is barred from running in the national elections scheduled for November. We defend the right of people to vote for whomever they want. We demand the right of Aristide to return to Haiti and oppose the ban on Fanmi Lavalas, despite our political opposition as Marxists to this populist party.

On May 4, after students at the State University Ethnology College in the capital held a series of protests against the occupation, MINUSTAH troops stormed the campus, firing tear gas and rubber bullets and arresting militant student leader Frantz Mathieu Junior. Faced with the growing unrest, the UN is sending 680 additional foreign policemen to augment the MINUSTAH force. The international workers movement must demand: Free all victims of military/police repression!

Unrest has spread to the countryside. On June 4, 10,000 peasants protested against the American agribusiness giant Monsanto, which had donated 475 tons of maize. They fear having to buy new seeds from Monsanto every year at prices they cannot afford. Haitian peasants have bitter memories of previous instances when the U.S. forced policies down their throats that ruined their livelihoods. After the Clinton White House compelled Haiti to drop tariffs on imports, subsidized U.S. rice flooded the Haitian market, bankrupting many peasants. Earlier, the U.S. had pressured the Haitian government to wipe out the Creole pigs indigenous to the country on the pretext that they might be infected with swine flu. The U.S. substituted its own pigs, which could not survive the Haitian climate.

The only way out of the misery imposed on neocolonial Haiti lies through proletarian socialist revolution throughout the Caribbean and, crucially, in the North American imperialist heartland. But the social base for workers revolution is exceedingly narrow in a country as destitute and ground down as Haiti. Struggles by the Haitian masses against imperialist depredation must be linked to class and social struggle in the neighboring Dominican Republic, where Haitians are a sizable component of the proletariat, and elsewhere in the Caribbean. It is especially crucial that workers in the belly of the U.S. imperialist beast—and in Canada as well—wage class struggle against their "own" capitalist rulers.

Our perspective—for a workers and peasants government in Haiti as part of a socialist federation of the Caribbean—is inextricably linked to the fight for the revolutionary overthrow of U.S. imperialism. In diaspora, Haitians, Jamaicans and others can play a crucial role as a bridge to the rest of the American proletariat, particularly to other black workers. The key is to build revolutionary workers parties—sections of a reforged Fourth International—to lead the workers in this struggle.■

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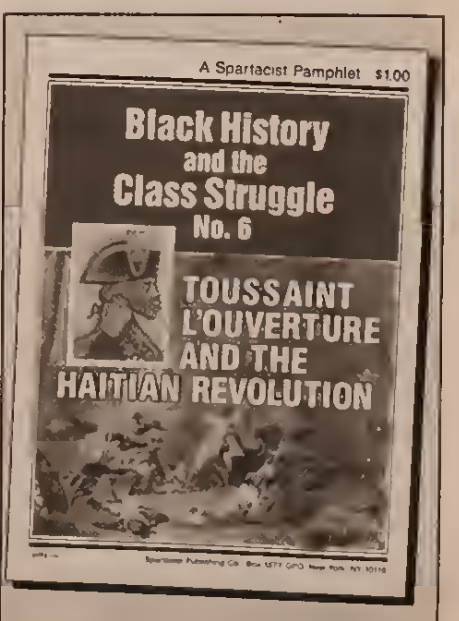

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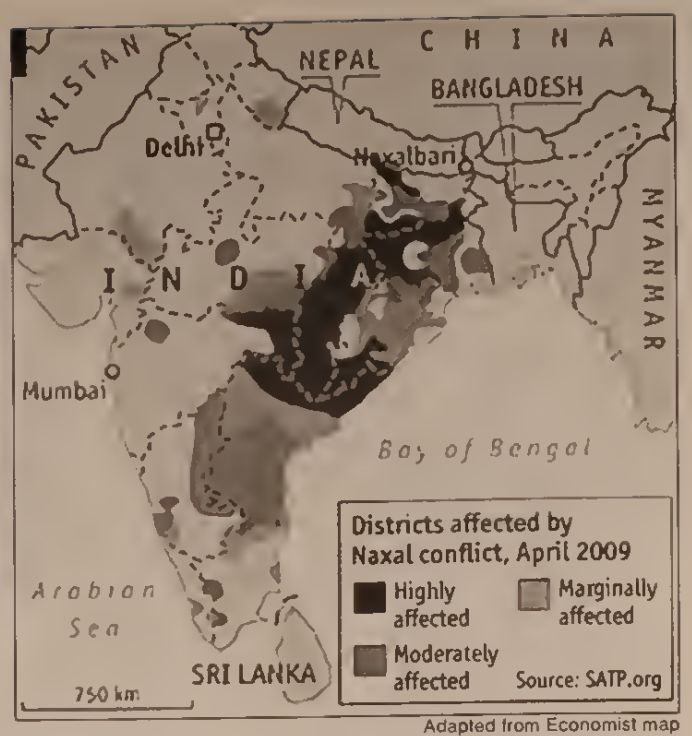
India...

(continued from page 1)

the UPA government banned the CPI (Maoist) under draconian "anti-terrorist" laws. Others have been targeted merely for speaking out against state repression. Arundhati Roy herself has been investigated for prosecution under the Special Public Security Act following another *Outlook India* article reporting on her visit to a Maoist-controlled area. Meanwhile left-wing activists are gunned down by police in extrajudicial "encounter killings." Protest the state witchhunt! Down with Operation Green Hunt!

Jeremy Veverka



Adapted from Economist map

Maoist Naxalite guerrillas (above) are active in one-third of India's administrative districts. Map at right shows India's "red corridor" in the eastern and central regions of the country.

Permanent Revolution vs. Stalinist Class Collaboration

The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) denounces the Indian government's war against the CPI (Maoist) and adivasi villagers, which is being waged at the behest of the venal Indian bourgeoisie and the international mining magnates. The working class in India and internationally must take up the defense of the Maoists and tribal peoples against the bloody state offensive.

But the political strategy of the CPI (Maoist) provides no way forward for India's oppressed masses. Like all the many variants of Indian Stalinism, the Maoists seek an alliance with a mythical "progressive" wing of the capitalist class in the "first stage" of a "two-stage" revolution. Party general secretary Ganapathy made this explicit in an interview:

> "We have a clear-cut understanding to unify all revolutionary, democratic, progressive, patriotic forces and all oppressed social communities including oppressed nationalities against imperialism, feudalism and comprador bureaucratic capitalism. Our New Democratic United Front (UF) consists of four democratic classes, i.e. workers, peasants, urban petty-bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie."
>
> —*Sanhati*, January 2010

The strategy of allying with a wing of the bourgeois exploiters—whether dubbed "national," "patriotic" or "progressive"—has produced defeat after defeat for the workers and oppressed, in India and around the world. *All* wings of the Indian capitalist class are tied by a thousand threads to the imperialist powers of Europe, North America and Japan; ***none*** are in any sense potential allies of the working class and oppressed. In *The State and Revolution* and many other works, V.I. Lenin, leader of the October 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, savaged the idea that the class interests of the bourgeoisie and proletariat are anything other than irreconcilable.

The Russian workers were able to take power in 1917 thanks to the Bolsheviks' intransigent struggle for class independence from the capitalists. The result was a workers state, a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the peasantry. Key to cementing the workers' alliance with the peasants was the Bolsheviks' support for peasant seizures of the landed estates and the division of the land among those who worked it. The Bolsheviks also won widespread support among the peasantry through their revolutionary opposition to the first interimperialist war, in which countless hundreds of thousands were killed among the working-class and peasant base of the army.

The perspective of permanent revolution, first developed by Leon Trotsky during the 1905 Russian Revolution and vindicated by the October 1917 proletarian seizure of power, outlines most clearly the road to liberation for the Indian masses. Like tsarist Russia, present-day India is marked by combined and uneven development, with stark contrasts of wealth and poverty, modern industries directly abutting unspeakable squalor. Myriad forms of special oppression—based on sex, caste, nationality, religion—are among the heritages of a pre-industrial past that were reinforced and deepened by nearly two centuries of brutal British colonial rule. This culminated with the British partition of the Indian subcontinent into India and Pakistan, which unleashed communalist slaughter and the forced migration of millions of Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus. Since independence, and mainly under the rule of the nominally secular Congress Party, the Indian bourgeoisie has continued to fan the flames of every kind of murderous division.

National and social liberation for the masses cannot be carried out by, or in alliance with, India's capitalist exploiters. What is required is the smashing of capitalist class rule and the creation of a workers and peasants government. The Indian proletariat is the only social force that can lead such a struggle. Due to its central role in production—where its collective labor in the factories, mines, transport systems and other industries is exploited by the capitalists for profit—the working class has vast potential power.

The essential instrument for victory is an internationalist Leninist vanguard party of the working class. Rejecting the centrality of the working class, the CPI (Maoist) bases itself on the rural peasantry. But the peasant masses, highly stratified and dispersed in small villages all over India, are incapable of cohering an independent social policy. There are only two decisive classes in capitalist society: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The peasants are part of a heterogeneous intermediate layer, the petty bourgeoisie. Their immediate felt interests are centrally proprietary, for the defense or acquisition of land. Thus peasant parties are at bottom pro-bourgeois or bourgeois, even though sections of some of such parties may be won to the side of the revolutionary proletariat.

Especially in countries like India where the working class is numerically smaller than the peasantry, the question of agrarian revolution is a key component of the program for proletarian state power. The working class must win the support of the masses of poor and/or landless peasants, including through demands for expropriation of the landlords and land to the tiller, while seeking as much as possible to neutralize the middle and upper strata of the peasantry.

Freedom from the imperialist yoke, the destruction of all forms of oppression, economic development in the interests of the vast majority—these urgent tasks require proletarian revolution and its extension to the advanced capitalist countries of North America, West Europe and Japan. A socialist revolution in India would reverberate throughout South Asia and the world over, finding powerful allies in the proletariat of the imperialist centers as well as that of the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state. A crucial task of an Indian workers state supported by the peasantry would be to generate the material basis to end poverty and hunger, including through the collectivization and modernization of agriculture. Success in this endeavor hinges on the resources that would be made available by socialist revolution in the imperialist heartlands.

A revolutionary workers party in India would champion the cause of all the downtrodden, including the rural and urban poor, oppressed castes and tribal peoples. It would intransigently fight for the liberation of India's hideously oppressed women and defend persecuted national and religious minorities, notably Muslims targeted by Hindu chauvinism. Such a party can only be forged through political struggle against the class-collaborationist programs of the various Stalinist organizations. The political outlook of the petty-bourgeois CPI (Maoist)—a species of "reformism with guns"—provides no alternative to the overt parliamentary reformism of the longstanding mass Stalinist parties, the Communist Party of India and Communist Party of India (Marxist).

Office of the Prime Minister

Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh (left) greets Ratan Tata, chairman of Tata industrial conglomerate, during U.S.-India Business Council meeting in Washington, D.C., November 2009.

Reuters

September 2009: Laborers in village near southern city of Hyderabad break coal to be used for steel production.

Indian Stalinism's History of Betrayal

The CPI (Maoist) is the largest of India's remaining Naxalite organizations, named for the Naxalbari district of West Bengal, the site of a major peasant revolt in 1967. Formed largely through splits from the CPI (Marxist)—which itself issued from the unitary CPI a few years earlier—the Naxalite movement attracted thousands of educated urban youth misled by the "revolutionary" rhetoric of Mao's China during the late 1960s. In opposing the crass parliamentarism of the CPI and CPI (Marxist), these youth abandoned the cities for the countryside and upheld a perspective of peasant-based "people's war."

The initial peasant uprisings were largely defeated by the early 1970s and China later renounced the Naxalites. The Indian Maoists soon fractured into dozens of competing outfits, some of which ended up centering their activities in urban slum districts rather than the countryside. Today the urban-based Maoist groups are in considerable decline and disarray. The largest remaining rural-based groups united in 2004 to form the CPI (Maoist), setting the stage for the present expanded insurgency.

Indian Stalinism has a long and sordid

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history of class collaboration. As early as 1926, under the guidance of the Indian pseudo-Marxist adventurer M.N. Roy (then a close ally of Stalin and Nikolai Bukharin in the leadership of the Communist International), the CPI began building a cross-class "Peasants' and Workers' Party" in Bengal. This party in turn operated as a pressure group on the bourgeois Indian National Congress of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Roy urged the CPI to go even further and create "a loyal nationalist party with a radical republican programme (Peoples' Party)" (cited in *History of the Communist Movement in India*, Volume 1, Communist Party of India [Marxist], 2005).

From the mid 1930s on, the CPI time and again gave political support to the bourgeois-nationalist Congress. For a period during World War II, they even renounced the struggle for Indian independence in favor of an alliance with the "democratic" British imperialist oppressors. (For more detail, see "The 'Quit India' Movement 50 Years On—Stalinist Alliance with Churchill Betrayed Indian Revolution," *Workers Hammer* Nos. 131 and 132, September/October and November/December 1992.)

Today the CPI and CPI (Marxist) act as overt supporters of Indian capitalism. Since 1977, these Stalinists have controlled the state government in West Bengal, wielding its repressive powers in defense of private property and profit against the poor and oppressed. In recent years, the "Left Front" regime headed by the CPI (Marxist) has repeatedly seized land from the peasants at the behest of Indian and international capitalist corporations, provoking widespread popular resistance.

In December 2006 the West Bengal government expropriated land in the Singur district on behalf of Tata Motors, one of India's largest capitalist conglomerates. Those who resisted were severely beaten and arrested while a young woman activist was brutally raped and murdered. The following March, thousands of police and armed CPI (Marxist) cadre assaulted peasants resisting a forced expropriation in Nandigram. At least 14 were killed and over 200 injured. (See "India: The Nandigram Massacre," *Spartacist Canada* No. 159, Winter 2008/2009, reprinted in *WV* No. 929, 30 January 2009.)

More recently, the West Bengal regime has mobilized police to attack adivasi villagers protesting expropriations in Lalgarh on behalf of the Jindal Steel and Power conglomerate. And today the CPI and CPI (Marxist) support the central UPA government's bloody offensive against the Maoists. Such is the political logic of the program of "revolution by stages": the masses remain brutally oppressed by capitalism, and the second, supposedly socialist, stage never comes.

From the beginning, the Naxalite forces have upheld a variant of the same Stalinist class collaborationism. Calling for a "People's Democratic Revolution," founding leader Charu Mazumdar wrote in 1970 that "the majority of the business community will come with us. They are a large part of the national bourgeoisie" (quoted in Sumanta Banerjee, *India's Simmering Revolution: The Naxalite Uprising*, 1980).

While talking of "worker-peasant unity," in retreating to the countryside the Naxalites turned away from the working class and transformed themselves into a petty-bourgeois, peasant-based movement both in composition and political outlook. Their model is the "people's war" waged by Mao's Chinese Communist Party in the 1930s and '40s. Mao's retreat from the cities to the countryside followed the defeat of the 1925-27 Chinese Revolution, during which Stalin and his henchmen—prominently including M. N. Roy—ordered the Chinese Communists to subordinate the workers to the bourgeois-nationalist Guomindang. The result was a bloodbath of tens of thousands of Communist-led workers in Shanghai and other cities.

In polemicizing against the peasant-based perspective of the Chinese Stalinists in the 1930s and upholding the independent class mobilization of the urban proletariat, Leon Trotsky wrote:

> "The peasant movement is a mighty revolutionary factor insofar as it is directed against the large landowners, militarists, feudalists, and usurers. But in the peasant movement itself are very powerful proprietary and reactionary tendencies, and at a certain stage it can become hostile to the workers and sustain that hostility already equipped with arms. He who forgets about the dual nature of the peasantry is not a Marxist. The advanced workers must be taught to distinguish from among 'communist' labels and banners the actual social processes."
>
> —"Peasant War in China and the Proletariat" (September 1932)

It was only under the highly exceptional circumstances of the immediate post-WWII period that Mao's peasant-based People's Liberation Army was able to take the cities and smash capitalist class rule in 1949. These included the collapse of the corrupt Guomindang forces, the absence of the working class as an immediate contender for power and, crucially, the existence of the Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state, as an economic and military lifeline. From the outset Maoist China was not a "New Democracy" based on a "bloc of four classes"—the standard parlance of the Stalinists—but a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But the Chinese workers state was bureaucratically deformed from its inception, ruled by a nationalist bureaucracy hostile to the independent struggles of the working class and the necessary perspective of international socialist revolution. This was shown clearly in China's counterrevolutionary alliance with U.S. imperialism against the Soviet Union during the 1970s and '80s.

no credit

1927 Shanghai massacre, marking defeat of Second Chinese Revolution, was prepared by liquidation of Communist Party into bourgeois-nationalist Guomindang, a policy ordered by Stalin and his henchmen.

Despite the bureaucratic rule of Mao and his successors, the Chinese Revolution was a beacon for millions of oppressed toilers in Asia. China's collectivized economy has brought immense gains for workers, peasants and women, not least an end to centuries of chronic starvation in the countryside. This stands in stark contrast to developments in capitalist India. Today, U.S. imperialism sees India as a strategic ally in its drive to overturn the gains of the Chinese Revolution. The ICL stands for the unconditional military defense of China against imperialism and counterrevolution. At the same time, we call for a proletarian political revolution to oust the nationalist Stalinist ruling caste in Beijing and create a regime based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

The Revolutionary Potential of the Indian Working Class

As we wrote in the 1998 ICL "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program":

> "The partial character of the anti-capitalist revolutions in the colonial world leads us to reaffirm the Marxist-Leninist concept of the proletariat as the only social force capable of making the socialist revolution. The ICL fundamentally opposes the Maoist doctrine, rooted in Menshevism and Stalinist reformism, which rejects the vanguard role of the working class and substitutes peasant-based guerrilla warfare as the road to socialism."
>
> —*Spartacist* (English-language edition) No. 54, Spring 1998

The Naxalite movement misdirected a generation of leftist Indian youth, who abandoned the struggles of the urban working class in favor of the chimera of rural guerrillaism. The bankruptcy of this perspective is even more evident today with the substantial growth of the Indian proletariat.

While over two-thirds of the population still lives in rural areas and slightly over half the workforce is engaged in agriculture, both the urban population and manufacturing output have grown rapidly over recent decades. Some 14 percent of the overall workforce toils in industries ranging from textiles, chemicals and food processing to steel, transportation equipment, machinery production and more. There are thousands of large factories and major industrial concentrations throughout the country.

AP

October 2009: Auto workers protest in Gurgaon, outside New Delhi, after worker was killed in clash with strikebreakers.

Despite the misleadership of the CPI and the CPI (Marxist), as well as the influence of the bourgeois Congress Party and various regional and caste-based parties, the Indian working class has repeatedly demonstrated its social power. An article titled "Deadly Labor Wars Hinder India's Rise" in the *Wall Street Journal* (24 November 2009) described how recent strikes and occupations have been "fueled by the discontent of workers, many of whom say they haven't partaken of the past decade's prosperity." Last year alone, major strikes hit companies from the domestic automaker Mahindra & Mahindra to plants owned by Finland's Nokia, South Korea's Hyundai and the Nestlé food conglomerate.

In September 2009, a six-week strike by over 2,000 workers at an Indian-owned auto supplier in the Gurgaon-Manesar industrial belt near Delhi left the U.S. auto giant Ford without transmission parts, leading to production shutdowns at plants in Canada and the U.S. More than 100,000 workers at upwards of 70 plants in the Gurgaon-Manesar area joined a one-day walkout to protest the murder of a striker by company thugs. The direct impact of the strike on Ford's North American operations underlines the need for active solidarity by U.S. and Canadian workers with their class brothers and sisters in India.

In the first few months of this year, hundreds of thousands of telecommunications workers and coal miners struck against privatization and job cuts, while unions staged a countrywide one-day general strike on April 27 against soaring price rises for essential goods. An even larger general strike on July 5, organized by a tacit alliance of the Stalinist Left Front parties and the Hindu-chauvinist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), was called to protest rising fuel prices.

The Maoists *at best* confine the restive urban working class to the role of passive spectator of their rural "people's war," leaving the workers in the clutches of the overtly pro-capitalist Left Front parties and bourgeois forces like Congress and the BJP. Meanwhile, the CPI (Maoist) has extended the Naxalite policy of "annihilation of class enemies"—the executions of individual landlords and state agents—to the kidnapping and killing of cadres of rival Stalinist parties, including union leaders, whom they label "social fascists." Such murderous violence against other left and working-class parties, so typical of Stalinism, is repugnant and must be condemned.

The Maoists also regularly seek alliances with one or another openly capitalist party. During the protests against the Singur and Nandigram atrocities, they made a scarcely concealed alliance with the right-wing Trinamool (Grassroots) Congress of Mamata Banerjee, the main

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India...

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parliamentary rival of the Left Front in West Bengal. Having joined the UPA government in New Delhi, Banerjee & Co. have now endorsed the armed offensive against the Maoists.

Mass Plebeian Revolt in Nepal

The logic of Maoist class collaboration has played out clearly just to the north in the Himalayan country of Nepal. Over the past two decades, Nepal has been wracked by a deepgoing revolt centered on the oppressed peasantry and again led by Maoist forces. A major impetus for this struggle was opposition to the monarchy. By 2006, Maoist forces, which significantly include a large number of women, controlled up to 80 percent of the countryside, where they enacted significant social reforms including legal equality for women, an end to the caste system, the establishment of schools and road construction. Following a period of mass demonstrations including a prolonged general strike in 2006, they were able to entrench themselves in the capital, Kathmandu.

The Maoists then entered a bourgeois coalition government, and in 2008 emerged as the largest party in parliamentary elections that led to the end of the monarchy. After leaving the government a year later following a standoff over the dismissal of the army chief, this May the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)—UCPN (Maoist)—launched an "indefinite general strike" for a new "national unity government." The strike was soon abandoned, and the Maoists then signed a deal to continue negotiations toward a new government, while a rival Stalinist-derived outfit, the Unified Marxist-Leninists, remained in the interim regime. Maoist guerrillas are confined to camps, nominally under United Nations control, while their leaders seek their integration into the bourgeois armed forces.

The organization now known as the UCPN (Maoist) has always had close links to India's Naxalites and upholds a similar dogma of "revolution by stages." Its 2001 "Common Minimum Policy and Programme" demanded a "people's democratic dictatorship with the participation of all the progressive classes including the national bourgeoisie." While running the government in 2008-09, the Maoists explicitly upheld capitalism and supported legislation to ban strikes. Reporting that "the government is planning to restrict bandhs [street protests] and strikes in industries and essential commodities," the *Himalayan Times* online (10 April 2009) quoted Maoist finance minister Baburam Bhattarai: "We are in a new political set-up and it demands a new outlook in business and industries also."

Unlike India, Nepal has very little in the way of an industrial proletariat. Three quarters of the workforce is involved in agriculture and 90 percent of the urban labor force works in the "informal" sector, largely small family workshops. While trade unions organized by various parties claim hundreds of thousands of members, what industrial activity there is mainly involves the processing of agricultural products like pulses (e.g., lentils), jute, sugar cane, tobacco and grain. The garment industry, largely based on primitive handicraft technology, once employed as many as 300,000 workers but has now almost entirely collapsed. About three million Nepalese—over 10 percent of the population—have moved abroad to seek work, including important concentrations in India and elsewhere in Asia.

The oppressed masses of Nepal need a ***Marxist-internationalist*** perspective that links the struggle for social modernization and liberation to the class struggles of the proletariat in more advanced countries beyond the country's borders. A workers revolution in neighboring India would have a massive immediate effect on Nepal, posing a struggle for a socialist federation of the subcontinent. Conversely, a huge plebeian upheaval in Nepal drawing in its small working class could help to spark a proletarian upsurge in India.

Sharply opposing such a perspective, the petty-bourgeois UCPN (Maoist) pushes retrograde Nepalese nationalism, including against so-called "cultural pollution" from India. The Maoists' "40 Point Demands," issued in 1996 on the eve of their armed insurgency, includes calls for the Nepal-India border to be "controlled and systematized," for cars with Indian license plates to be banned, and for the suppression of Hindi-language films, videos, magazines and newspapers. In a series of recent pronouncements, the Indian Maoists have criticized their erstwhile comrades in Nepal for their "dangerous reformist positions." But the Nepalese Maoists are only carrying out the logic of Mao-Stalinist nationalism and class collaboration.

ИЗВѢСТІЯ
Центральнаго Исполнительнаго Комитета
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РАБОЧИХЪ и СОЛДАТСКИХЪ ДЕПУТАТОВЪ.
ДЕКРЕТЪ О ЗЕМЛѢ

Novosti

Soviet government issued "Decree on Land" expropriating landed estates one day after proletarian seizure of power in October 1917 Revolution. Right: Uzbekistan peasant receives land and livestock certificate.

Forge a Leninist-Trotskyist Party!

India's vaunted development over the past two decades has benefited only a small section of the population: the filthy rich bourgeoisie and a petty-bourgeois technocratic/managerial stratum in the cities. The working class faces horrific working and living conditions and poverty-level wages, while squalid slums expand everywhere as displaced peasants descend on the cities to seek work. Caste, religion, language and other divides are fostered by the rulers to maintain their oppressive hold.

The situation cries out for the kind of perspective fought for by Lenin and Trotsky in the 1917 October Revolution: the workers seizing power at the head of the oppressed masses, agrarian revolution to liberate the peasantry, the socialization and rational reorganization of the economy in the interests of human needs not profit, and the fight to extend socialist revolution internationally, especially to the imperialist heartlands. In India, such a perspective alone can lay the basis for planned economic development that benefits, rather than destroys the lives of, impoverished populations like the adivasis.

Social liberation in South Asia will not come through isolated struggles in the forests and jungles, but requires the mobilization of the urban proletariat under revolutionary leadership. In the fight to forge such a leadership, crucial lessons can be drawn from the work of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India (BLPI), Indian section of the Trotskyist Fourth International, during World War II. While the Stalinists backed British imperialism and opposed the struggle for Indian independence, and later returned to subordinating the workers to the bourgeois Congress, the BLPI fought heroically for a Marxist proletarian perspective.

This proud history was later squandered, starting with the dissolution of the BLPI in 1948 to pursue a liquidationist entry into the thoroughly reformist Socialist Party of J.P. Narayan. Over the following years, the remnants of the once powerful Indian Trotskyist cadre were assimilated into social democracy. Thus when a new wave of youthful radicalism appeared in India in the late 1960s it was led into the dead end of Naxalite Maoism. The small ostensibly Trotskyist groups that operated from the 1970s on, generally associated with the revisionist "United Secretariat" (USec) of the late Ernest Mandel, continued to push abject accommodation to non-revolutionary forces. By the mid 2000s, the Indian USec section collapsed and disappeared.

EPA

Kathmandu, May 6: Maoists in Nepal rally during general strike demanding ouster of prime minister.

The ICL fights to reforge the Fourth International as the world party of socialist revolution. Militants in India seeking the road to revolutionary Marxism must examine the program of Trotskyism and the record of the early BLPI, which uniquely chart a path to the Indian workers revolution and a socialist federation of South Asia. As the BLPI wrote in its founding program, issued in 1942:

> "The peasantry, the largest numerically and the most atomized, backward and oppressed class, is capable of local uprisings and partisan warfare, but requires the leadership of a more advanced class for this struggle to be elevated to an all-national level. Without such leadership the peasantry alone cannot make a revolution. The task of such leadership falls in the nature of things on the Indian proletariat, which is the only class capable of leading the toiling masses in the onslaught against Imperialism, landlordism and the Native Princes....
>
> "But the leadership of the working class in the bourgeois-democratic revolution poses before the working class the prospect of seizing the power and in addition to accomplishing the long overdue bourgeois-democratic tasks of proceeding with its own socialist tasks. And thus the bourgeois-democratic revolution develops uninterruptedly into the proletarian revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the only state-form capable of supplanting the dictatorship of the imperialist bourgeoisie in India....
>
> "The ultimate fate of the revolution in India, as in Russia, will be determined in the arena of the international revolution. Nor will India by its own forces be able to accomplish the task of making the transition to Socialism. Not only the backwardness of the country, but also the international division of labor and the interdependence produced by capitalism itself—of the different parts of the world economy, demand that this task of the establishment of Socialism can be accomplished only on a world scale. The Indian proletariat will, of course, proceed with the socialist transformation of society to the extent that this is possible in the concrete circumstances, but the establishment of the socialist society will depend on the course of international revolution. The victorious revolution in India, however, dealing a mortal blow to the oldest and most widespread Imperialism in the world, will, on the one hand, produce the most profound crisis in the entire capitalist world and shake World Capitalism to its foundations. On the other hand, it will inspire and galvanize into action millions of proletarians and colonial slaves the world over and blaze the trail of World Revolution."■

International Communist League pamphlet comprising three articles from ICL press: "The Development and Extension of Leon Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution," "A Trotskyist Critique of Germany 1923 and the Comintern" and "Down With Executive Offices of the Capitalist State!" These articles together constitute an introduction to the historically founded principles and program of Trotskyism (i.e., genuine Marxism).

$2 (56 pages)

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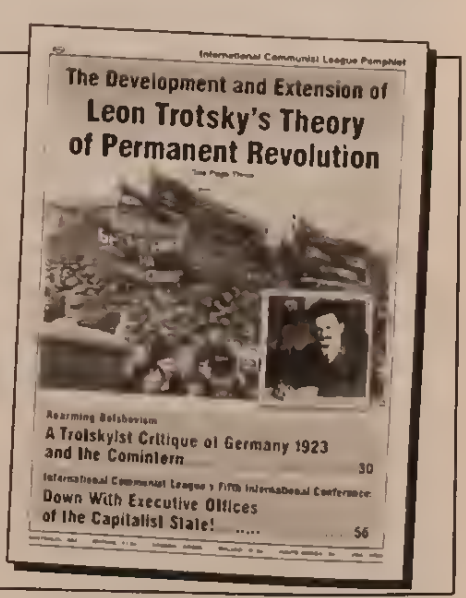


Stewart...

(continued from page 12)

applied. Charging Stewart with perjury is as absurd as accusing a stripper of prudery. Inside and outside the courtroom, Stewart was open and outspoken about her actions, and in her reactions throughout the case.

Lynne Stewart's public post-conviction utterances were recorded by the prosecution and presented to the judge in a compendium for review and resentencing. Her proclamation following her October 2006 sentencing that she could do 28 months "standing on my head" was wielded by Koeltl as clear evidence that his original sentence was "not sufficient" to deter her from continuing as an advocate for those caught in the web of government repression. The court's decision is also clearly meant to deter others from following a similar road. What gored them was not the promise of headstands but the fact that Stewart was unrepentant and continued to act as a leftist opponent of the government.

Stewart's persecution has spanned three presidencies and five attorneys general. She ran afoul of Special Administrative Measures (SAMs) imposed by the Clinton administration to strip prisoners of basic rights, including the Sixth Amendment right to counsel, and to hinder their ability to communicate with the outside world. She was convicted under Clinton's 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act. With the Democrats in tow, the Bush White House seized on the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon to greatly enhance Clinton's "anti-terror" measures, making Stewart's prosecution a centerpiece of the "war on terror." This "war"—a pretext for increased imperialist marauding abroad and for a massive attack on democratic rights "at home"—has been reinforced with a vengeance under Barack Obama. The workers movement must oppose the entire construct of the bogus "war on terror."

At a meeting of the Lynne Stewart Defense Committee shortly after the 2005 convictions, supporters of the Partisan Defense Committee—a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League—spoke of the importance of fighting for freedom for Stewart's codefendants Yousry and Abdel Sattar. Although Stewart replied that she applauded the PDC for its efforts, the defense committee, run by the National Lawyers Guild (NLG), abandoned the other two defendants. Longtime "movement" lawyer and NLG icon Liz Fink, who quit the legal team days before Stewart's resentencing, filed court papers that despicably attempted to exonerate Stewart by framing up Yousry! The prosecution seized on this in the resentencing to mock the defense team. Stewart, to her credit, directed defense attorney Jill Shellow to reply that those were Fink's words, not Stewart's.

The defense of Stewart and her co-defendants is an elemental duty for socialist opponents of bloody U.S. imperialism. But the reformist left has abandoned Yousry and Abdel Sattar no less than have the liberal-radical lawyers. Post-sentencing articles by Socialist Action and the Workers World Party continue their normal practice of disappearing their names. Nor can any defense of Yousry or Abdel Sattar be found in the July 19 statement of the Party for Socialism and Liberation, which nonetheless intones, "The scapegoating of Stewart by the government is part of an ongoing war against civil rights and civil liberties, particularly targeting the Arab-American and Muslim communities. With her jailing the government's message to all attorneys is clear: 'Do not represent Arab people and/or Muslims'." What about Yousry and Abdel Sattar—U.S. citizens prejudged as guilty because they are Arabs in the government's crosshairs?!

Every witchhunt has its own particular context and dimension. Lynne Stewart was resentenced by the same court that, at the height of the McCarthyite red scare, sentenced Julius and Ethel Rosenberg to death in 1951 on frame-up charges of conspiring to pass the "secret of the atomic bomb" to the Soviet Union. The death penalty was applied against Communists then for the same reason a leftist attorney has been effectively sentenced to die in prison today: to terrorize *you*. Through "terrorism guidelines," Supreme Court rulings, legislation and presidential directives, the ruling class has seized sweeping powers to bolster the capitalist state: an apparatus of repression that employs police and judicial terror against workers, blacks, immigrants and all the oppressed (see "Supreme Court Decision Shreds First Amendment Rights," *WV* No. 961, 2 July).

The conviction and imprisonment of Stewart, Yousry and Abdel Sattar must be fought. Although "anti-terror" measures have been primarily aimed at Muslims and immigrants, the ultimate target of such repression is the multiracial working class, which has the potential social power and class interest to be the gravediggers of the racist capitalist order. Standing in the way of such struggle are the pro-capitalist union tops who put themselves forward as lieutenants for American imperialism. With the economy tanking and U.S. imperialism's Afghan adventure teetering, Obama seeks to further tighten the screws of repression. It is our task to forge a revolutionary workers party that champions the cause of all the exploited and oppressed in the struggle for a socialist transformation of this society. Fighting the government's "terrorism" frame-ups is an essential component of that task today.

The PDC has contributed to Lynne Stewart's defense and encourages others to do the same. Donations can be sent to: Lynne Stewart Organization, 1070 Dean Street, Brooklyn, New York 11216.■

Oakland...

(continued from page 12)

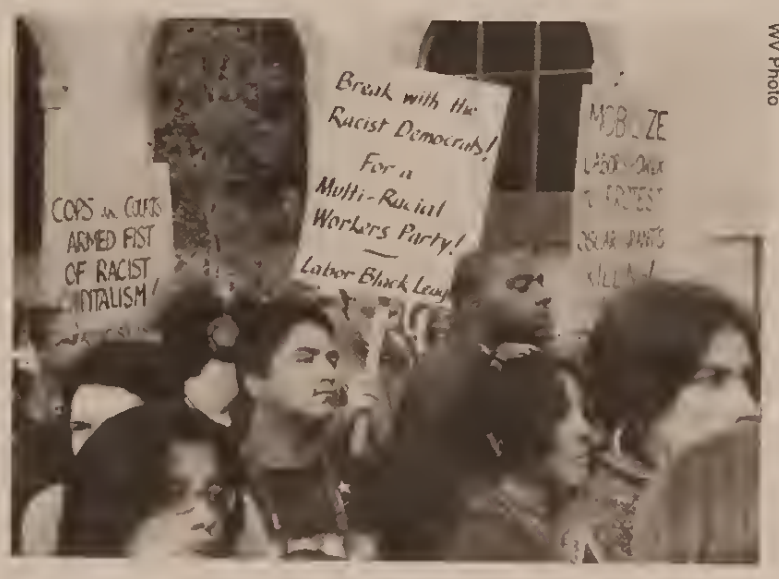
reality for black people and other minorities. Protesters held signs reading, "We Are All Oscar Grant!" The Bay Area Spartacist League and Labor Black League for Social Defense joined the protest, while the L.A. Spartacist League joined a protest in that city the same evening.

In Oakland, an army of riot cops mobilized from 15 different police agencies (with 20,000 National Guardsmen on standby) descended upon the protesters. The cop action had been rehearsed in a "simulation" weeks before, where plainclothes cops posed as protesters and threw objects at officers. The bourgeois media did its part to vilify protesters, whipping up bigoted, sensationalist hysteria about impending violence by "anarchist" rioters and flashing scenes of people hurriedly fleeing heavily black Oakland the day of the verdict.

The stage was set for cop provocations and attacks. A siren-blaring squad car hit a deaf woman protester. Walter Riley, a local black civil rights attorney, was choked and arrested as he tried to enter his own office. Some 78 protesters were arrested, many charged with "failure to disperse" and several with trumped-up felonies. *We demand: Drop all charges and free all jailed protesters now!*

As the Partisan Defense Committee wrote in a July 13 protest letter to the Alameda County District Attorney, the lurid stories of outsiders fomenting "violence" in Oakland were "a direct echo of the forces of racist reaction in the Jim Crow South who branded civil rights movement activists as 'outside agitators.' In fact, the assault on and arrest of protesters in Oakland on the night of July 8 is just the latest vindictive attempt by Mayor Dellums and his cops to silence and intimidate those who would protest rampant, racist police terror."

As one protester put it, "We've been suffering police brutality for generations.... We want it to end." Generations have indeed been suffering the racist oppression of black people that is rooted in American capitalism, enforced by both the Democratic and Republican parties of capital. The story has played out again and again. A cop kills a black person. In the rare instance when the cop is made to face charges, the venue is changed to ensure a jury with no black people. The cop, if convicted of anything, gets the most minimal sentence. Anger erupts, and to head this off, Democratic politicians and their water boys on the reformist left offer means to "reform" the justice system—federal "investigations," appeals to the courts to jail killer cops, community "oversight" and "control" of the police.



WV Photo

Oakland, July 8: Spartacist supporters at protest against verdict in killing of Oscar Grant.

Their purpose is to lull the working class and minorities into believing that this racist *injustice* system can be reformed to serve the exploited and the oppressed. The cops are the hired guns of the capitalist ruling class. Their job is to uphold racist capitalist "law and order" through brute force: breaking strikes, rounding up ghetto and barrio youth, repressing social protest. The courts, to which many are looking for some justice, are an essential part of this murderous repressive machinery. Capitalist "law and order" is based on frame-ups, lies and police violence. There will be no end to racist cop terror, no justice for working people and the oppressed, until the multiracial proletariat takes power through a socialist revolution that destroys the capitalists' entire apparatus of state repression.

An intended result of police "reform" schemes is to channel anger over their racist atrocities into the electoral con game of bourgeois "lesser evilism"—i.e., support to the Democratic Party. Right on cue, Democratic Congresswoman Barbara Lee issued an appeal to Barack Obama's Justice Department to investigate civil rights violations in the killing of Oscar Grant. Mayor Dellums, who oversees cop repression as the city's chief executive, supported Lee's appeal. The reformist left, which almost to a man championed the election of Obama as imperialist Commander-in-Chief as a victory for the workers and oppressed, has been singing much the same song.

Take the International Socialist Organization (ISO). After the capitalist media smeared protesters as rioters and looters, the ISO's *Socialist Worker* (9 July) outrageously intoned: "If politicians truly cared about violence after the verdict, they could have taken a few more positive steps"! Parroting Lee and Dellums' call for federal intervention, the article complains that "there is no independent BART police oversight board." In fact, Oakland and the cities surrounding it have served as a virtual laboratory for such liberal schemes, starting in the 1970s when Berkeley established the first police review board in the country. That never stopped Berkeley cops from killing black people with impunity. Ditto for the Oakland Citizens' Police Review Board established in 1980 following a police killing spree that took the lives of nine black people the previous year.

In the same vein, the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) calls for "community control" of the police and declares in a statement for its gubernatorial election campaign on the petty-bourgeois Peace and Freedom Party ticket that "cops who violate civil rights and murder working-class youth should be jailed" (PSLweb.org, 16 July). The call to "jail the killer cops" has been raised by the PSL, the ISO, the dubious Bolshevik Tendency and many other groups. Reinforcing the liberal lie that the state can be cleaned up and made accountable to the "will of the people," this demand channels anger over cop terror right back into the very "justice" system that upholds state violence in every way. The ISO adds the absurd demand to "disarm all the police," as if the capitalists would ever give up the apparatus of organized violence by which they defend their rule and profits.

The courts almost always let the cops off on the grounds that they're just "doing their job." On the rare occasion when the rulers find it necessary to punish one of their murderous gendarmes, the purpose is to refurbish the image of the state and its armed bodies of men. The bourgeoisie occasionally upholds the pretense of "justice" in order to put a gloss on a social order based on class exploitation and oppression. We noted in an article on Oscar Grant's killing in *WV* No. 928 (16 January 2009): "Even if one cop were charged and imprisoned, it wouldn't stop police brutality and terror. The cops serve, together with the military and the prisons, as the core of a state whose purpose is the repression of the working class and oppressed by any means necessary."

Our perspective is the mobilization of the working class at the head of the oppressed, independent from all capitalist parties, politicians and the state. As the Bay Area Labor Black League wrote in a 12 January 2009 statement following Oscar Grant's killing:

> "The mass outrage against cop terror needs an organized political expression, and not one that strengthens the hand of the Democratic Party, the political tool of the very capitalist rulers whose interests the cops 'serve and protect.' The Labor Black League for Social Defense fights to link the anger of the ghettos and barrios to the power of our class, the multiracial labor movement. Labor protest by the Bay Area's powerful and multiracial unions—starting with the BART transit unions and including longshore, grocery, city and other workers—would provide the social power of a working-class political axis."

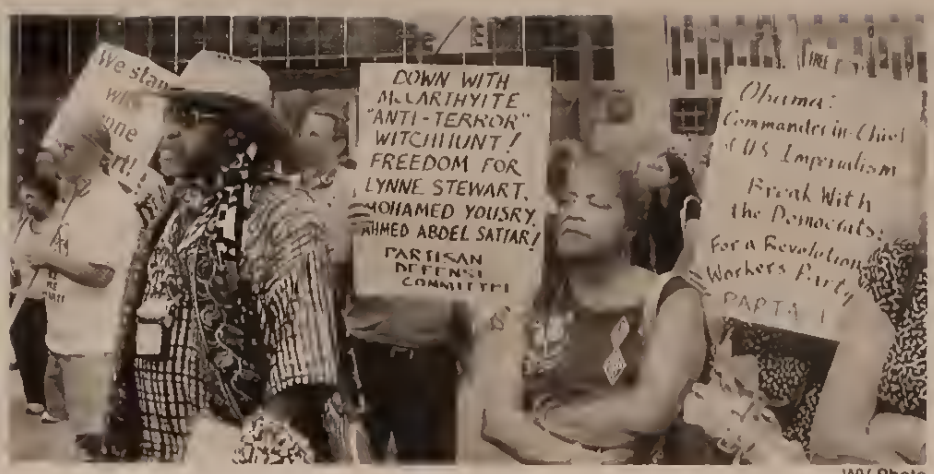
What prevents labor from waging such struggle are the pro-capitalist union bureaucrats, who have shackled the workers to their class enemies, including by organizing cops—the sworn enemies of labor and blacks—into the unions. The same SEIU union that organizes BART maintenance workers and Oakland city workers includes the BART cops! We demand: *Cops out of the unions!*

Addressing the July 8 Oakland protest, a Spartacist spokesman declared, "We fight to build a revolutionary leadership to unite labor and all the oppressed to get rid of the entire capitalist system." Our speaker continued: "In a Socialist America we can use the wealth created by the working class to open the road to freedom from exploitation and racial oppression for good! The Spartacist League is dedicated to building a workers party that can lead this fight. Racist cop terror, we say no! This whole damn system's got to go!"■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Vicious Retribution for Defending Her Client

Roca/NY Daily News



WV Photo

Left: Lynne Stewart. Right: July 14 New York City protest against Stewart's resentencing.

Radical Lawyer Lynne Stewart Resentenced to 10 Years

Free Lynne Stewart, Mohamed Yousry, Ahmed Abdel Sattar!

Lynne Stewart was resentenced to ten years in prison on July 15 for zealously defending her client, a blind Egyptian cleric imprisoned for an alleged plot to blow up New York City landmarks in the early 1990s. U.S. District Court judge Koeltl's decision to more than quadruple Stewart's original sentence of 28 months is a loud affirmation by the Obama administration that there will be no let-up in the massive attacks on democratic rights under the "war on terror."

Stewart, her interpreter Mohamed Yousry and paralegal Ahmed Abdel Sattar were convicted in February 2005 of conspiracy to provide material support to terrorism and conspiracy to defraud the U.S. government. Abdel Sattar was also convicted of conspiracy to "kill and kidnap persons in a foreign country." What constituted "material support" was Stewart's *statement* to a Reuters reporter that her client urged his Egyptian supporters in the Islamic Group to reconsider their cease-fire with the Mubarak dictatorship. As we wrote in opposing the conviction of Stewart, Yousry and Abdel Sattar: "The verdict gives the government a green light to prosecute lawyers for the alleged crimes of their clients, thereby shooting the basic right to counsel to hell.... And if nobody can get a lawyer to zealously defend him from prosecution, then fundamental liberties, from the right to a trial and an attorney, to even the right of free speech and assembly, are choked" (*WV* No. 842, 18 February 2005).

All the judges and prosecutors involved acknowledge that Lynne Stewart, known for her defense of Black Panthers, radical leftists and others reviled by the capitalist state, did not commit or contribute to a single act of violence. Yet she is labeled a "terrorist" supporter and ostentatiously and brutally treated like a dangerous criminal by a capitalist government that is, in fact, the deadliest force for terror on the planet, raining death and destruction in Afghanistan and elsewhere on a daily basis. The point is to cow the rest of the population, particularly workers, minorities and the left, with the message: This is what could happen to you if you oppose, or defend opponents of, America's rulers.

The resentencing is for all intents and purposes a death sentence for Lynne Stewart, a 70-year-old woman currently undergoing chemotherapy for breast cancer. Stewart is transported from her jail cell to hospital rooms in leg irons and handcuffs shackled to a chain around her waist. She is chained to her hospital bed under 24-hour surveillance by an armed guard in the room and two more outside the door. Judge Koeltl repeatedly stated that his task was to hand down a sentence "neither insufficient but not greater than necessary." Apparently death in prison is not greater than necessary for an audacious leftist lawyer. Yousry is serving a 20-month sentence while Abdel Sattar is locked away for 24 years. ***Stewart, Yousry and Abdel Sattar should never have been charged and should not have spent a minute in jail!***

Judge Koeltl was directed to resentence Stewart by the Second Circuit Court of Appeals, which ruled last December that perjury was not taken into account in her original sentencing and that the government's draconian "terrorism enhancement" guidelines, which urge judges to vastly increase sentences in such cases, were not

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Cop Who Killed Oscar Grant Gets Slap on Wrist

Oakland Protesters Brave Racist Hysteria, Cop Riot

OAKLAND—In the early morning hours of New Year's Day 2009, Johannes Mehserle, a white Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) police officer, gunned down Oscar Grant III, a young black apprentice grocery butcher and father of a four-year-old girl. The killing was witnessed by dozens of train passengers and recorded by cell phones and BART's own video cameras. Mehserle shot Grant pointblank in the back while Grant lay prone on a BART station platform, pinned down by another cop calling him a "bitch ass n----r." This July 8, Mehserle was given a slap on the wrist for the brazenly racist killing. He was found guilty of "involuntary manslaughter" by a jury that included not a single black person, in a trial that was moved from Oakland, where the killing had sparked massive outrage, to Los Angeles thanks to the machinations of the Oakland city government under black Democratic mayor Ron Dellums.

At the trial, Mehserle's lawyer argued: "Police officers are different.... We give them guns and tell them to use those guns." This racist atrocity certainly bears that out. The *San Francisco Chronicle* reported Mehserle testifying that he thought Grant "might be going for a gun" and that he only meant to use his taser. This is hardly believable. Mehserle's gun weighed over two and a half pounds while the taser weighed less than a pound, and the weapons were kept on opposite sides of his body. Mehserle went so far as to handcuff Grant after the fatal shot. There can be no doubt: ***Oscar Grant was executed in cold blood.*** Due for sentencing on November 5, Mehserle may face as little as probation with no prison time.

On the evening of the verdict, a multiracial crowd of some 1,000 people gathered in downtown Oakland not only to voice their outrage over the outcome of the trial but to protest the police terror and racist oppression that is the daily

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 963 | GCU C-701 | 27 August 2010

U.S. Imperialism Stokes Anti-Muslim Bigotry

Chauvinist Mania Over "Ground Zero Mosque"

NEW YORK CITY—American and immigrant Muslims are under siege as a rabid campaign mounts against plans to build an Islamic community center two blocks from the site of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. What is being pilloried as the "Ground Zero mosque" is, in reality, the proposed 13-story Cordoba House/Park51 community center, which includes a mosque along with a pool and many other facilities. Polls showed that Manhattan voters favored the city-approved plans for the Cordoba Initiative's cultural center by a ten-percentage-point margin. But a Tea Party-style hate campaign got considerable traction in the outer boroughs of New York City and fueled a surge in anti-Muslim rallies nationally. New Islamic centers have been the targets of chauvinist protest in California, Wisconsin, Tennessee, Kentucky and Georgia, and on Staten Island and in Brooklyn in NYC.

In Manhattan, an "anti-mosque" rally mobilized several hundred near the proposed site on August 22, outnumbering counterprotesters. Far-right Dutch politician Geert Wilders, who calls for deporting immigrants, banning the Koran and closing Islamic schools in the Netherlands, has announced he will attend a reactionary mobilization at the World Trade Center site on September 11, the same day that a Florida church plans to hold an "International Burn a Koran Day." Wilders exemplifies the virulent anti-Islamic reaction sweeping Europe, where measures barring women from wearing the Islamic veil are being adopted in France, Spain and elsewhere, with Switzerland even banning the building of minarets on mosques following a hysterical fear-mongering campaign by ultra-right-wing politicians.

As proletarian fighters against racist capitalist rule, we staunchly oppose the persecution of any religious group and defend the right of the Cordoba Initiative to build its community center. We defend the separation of church and state and the First Amendment right of religious organizations to be free from government control, oversight and interference. At the same time, as atheist materialists we are firm opponents of religion itself—*all* religion—and the social and political reaction spawned by religious and national-chauvinist backwardness. Religious superstition and belief will fade away only as human want is conquered through socialist revolution and the creation of a communist society worldwide.

The outpouring of racist chauvinism in the U.S. underscores the urgency for trade unionists and all fighters for black and immigrant rights to forthrightly defend Muslim minorities, including against any fascist elements that emerge from the sewers of the "anti-mosque" campaign. The workers movement must oppose the whole construct of U.S. imperialism's "war on terror," which feeds the flames of bigotry by labeling people of Muslim faith or origin as "terrorists." What is needed is a fight against the policies of the misleaders of the labor movement, who from the onset of the "war on terror" signed on as lieutenants for the capitalist rulers in the name of "national unity."

This concocted "war," fought with very real weapons, is being continued into its tenth year with fervor by Obama and his government. At home, the capitalist rulers waved the "bloody shirt" of the nearly 3,000 killed at the World Trade Center on September 11 to implement repressive measures aimed first at immigrants from the Near East and South Asia. The government's "anti-terror" drive engendered an anti-Muslim lynch mob atmosphere that has returned with renewed fervor. As we warned from the outset, the USA Patriot Act, Maritime Transportation Security Act and other such measures threaten not only immigrants but black people and the entire labor movement. Abroad, Obama has made Afghanistan his preferred theater of imperialist carnage. Currently there are some 120,000 NATO forces, 65 percent of them American, wreaking havoc in Afghanistan. The troop "pullout" from Iraq leaves 56,000 U.S. "non-combat" personnel on the ground there along with thousands of mercenaries in Washington's pay.

These brutal military occupations are far from the end of the story. As part of its series titled "The Shadow War," the *New York Times* (14 August) reported: "In roughly a dozen countries—from the deserts of North Africa, to the mountains of Pakistan, to former Soviet republics crippled by ethnic and religious strife—the United States has significantly increased military and intelligence operations, pursuing the enemy using robotic drones and commando teams, paying contractors to spy and training local operatives to chase terrorists." The article documents secret airstrikes in Yemen (where the "collateral damage" included numerous civilians and the Marib Province deputy governor) as well as operations in Somalia waged from Kenya.

U.S. imperialism's occupation of Afghanistan, as well as all its depredations in Iraq and repeated drone attacks in Pakistan, serve not simply the quest to control oil supplies, as liberal-reformist opinion would have it, but to promote U.S. strategic interests worldwide against its imperialist rivals. These interests include not least the military encirclement of the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state, currently the imperialists' key target for capitalist counterrevolution. ***All U.S. troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan now! U.S. imperialists, hands off the world! For class struggle at home against the U.S. capitalist rulers!***

Getty

Reuters

Right: Victims of December 2009 NATO-led attack in Armul, Afghanistan. Obama voiced support for lower Manhattan Islamic center to promote aims of bloodsoaked U.S. imperialism in Muslim world.

Getty

Anti-Muslim bigots rally near World Trade Center site in Manhattan, August 22, amid racist hysteria over proposed Islamic cultural center.

Washington's "Good" Muslim

With the witches' brew of midterm electioneering on the boil, Sarah Palin, Newt Gingrich & Co. figure that it will

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Shirley Sherrod Thrown Under the Bus

Obama: CEO of Racist American Capitalism.....8

Tea Party: Spearhead of Racist Reaction

Partisan Defense Committee

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

The PDC is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization which champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League.

Free Walter and Gwendolyn Myers! Free the Cuban Five!

We print below a statement issued on August 3 by the Partisan Defense Committee.

The Partisan Defense Committee protests the prosecution and imprisonment of Walter Kendall Myers and his wife Gwendolyn Myers. A retired State Department analyst, Mr. Myers pleaded guilty last November to charges of conspiracy to commit espionage. Gwendolyn Myers pleaded guilty to conspiring to gather and transmit defense information to Cuba, which has been under the gun sights of U.S. imperialism since capitalist class rule was overthrown some 50 years ago. At their sentencing on July 16, Walter Myers forthrightly announced, "We did not intend to hurt any individual American. Our only objective was to help the Cuban people defend their revolution." United States District Judge Reggie Walton vindictively sentenced 73-year-old Walter Myers to life without parole, and the 72-year-old Gwendolyn Myers to 81 months. This could well be a death sentence for Gwendolyn Myers, who has already suffered a heart attack since her June 2009 arrest.

From the interests of the working closs ond oppressed in the U.S. ond oround the world, what the Myers ore occused of is not o crime. We defend them as port of our defense of Cuba, a bureaucrotically deformed workers stote. We demond their immediate freedom.

The federal prosecutors claimed that in the years leading up to his retirement in 2007, Walter Myers examined hundreds of intelligence reports dealing with Cuba, many classified or top-secret, and that information from these were passed on to Cuban authorities. According to the federal criminal complaint, Mr. Myers, a great-grandson of Alexander Graham Bell, was recruited to Cuban intelligence along with his wife after they made a trip to Cuba in 1978. Myers' diary of that trip recorded his growing bitterness over lack of decent medical care, oil company greed and indifference to poverty in the U.S. as contrasted with Cuba where efforts were underway to eradicate these evils.

The elimination of capitalist rule in Cuba in 1960-61 led to enormous gains for working people despite the rule of a bureaucratic nationalist caste led by Fidel Castro. The centralized planned economy guarantees everyone a job, housing, food and education. Cubans now enjoy one of the highest literacy rates in the world. Despite the crippling effects of the U.S. blockade, the free health care system is still far and away the best in economically underdeveloped countries. The revolution especially has benefited women: domination of the Catholic Church was broken, and abortion is a free health service. Infant mortality is lower than in parts of the First World, and Cuba has more doctors and teachers per capita than just about anywhere else in the world.

The U.S. ruling class has worked relentlessly to overthrow the Cuban Revolution and re-establish the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie—from the 1961 Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs) invasion to repeated attempts to assassinate Castro; from funding counterrevolutionary terrorists in Miami to the ongoing economic embargo. The U.S. rulers continue to harbor their trained terrorists, like Orlando Bosch and Luis Posada Carriles, who engineered the 1976 bombing of a Cuban airliner that killed 73 people. We say: Send Posada and Bosch back to Cuba to be tried by their victims!

We also defend and call for the release of the Cuban Five, Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González and René González—

A. Rea

Walter and Gwendolyn Myers

courageous men who warned Cuba of the plots by such U.S.-supported *gusano* counterrevolutionary terrorists—as well as Ana Belen Montes, a Defense Intelligence Agency officer sentenced to 25 years for passing military information to the Cuban government. Their actions that assisted the defense of the Cuban deformed workers state from the most dangerous imperialist power in the world are not only defensible but laudable.

The Partisan Defense Committee calls on the international workers movement to take up the defense of these prisoners: Freedom for Walter Kendall Myers and Gwendolyn Myers! Free the Cuban 5! Free Ana Belen Montes! Defend Cuba! Down with the embargo! U.S. out of Guantánamo Bay now!■

Honor the Memory of Leon Trotsky!

TROTSKY

LENIN

This August 20 marks the 70th anniversary of the assassination of Leon Trotsky, co-leader with V.I. Lenin of the October 1917 proletarian Russian Revolution. We reprint below excerpts from a speech by James P. Cannon, the founder of American Trotskyism, at a memorial meeting held in New York City eight days after Trotsky was murdered by a Stalinist agent in Mexico.

Comrade Trotsky's entire conscious life, from the time he entered the workers' movement in the provincial Russian town of Nikolayev at the age of eighteen up till the moment of his death in Mexico City forty-two years later, was completely dedicated to work and struggle for one central idea. He stood for the emancipation of the workers and all the oppressed people of the world, and the transformation of society from capitalism to socialism by means of a social revolution. In his conception, this liberating social revolution requires for success the leadership of a revolutionary political party of the workers' vanguard....

Trotsky himself believed that ideas are the greatest power in the world. Their authors may be killed, but ideas, once promulgated, live their own life. If they are correct ideas, they make their way through all obstacles. This was the central, dominating concept of Comrade Trotsky's philosophy. He explained it to us many, many times. He once wrote: "It is not the party that makes the program [the idea]; it is the program that makes the party." In a personal letter to me, he once wrote: "We work with the most correct and powerful ideas in the world, with inadequate numerical forces and material means. But correct ideas, in the long run, always conquer and make available for themselves the necessary material means and forces."

Trotsky, a disciple of Marx, believed with Marx that "an idea, when it permeates the mass, becomes a material force." Believing that, Comrade Trotsky never doubted that his work would live after him. Believing that, he could proclaim on his deathbed his confidence in the future victory of the Fourth International which embodies his ideas. Those who doubt it do not know Trotsky.

Trotsky himself believed that his greatest significance, his greatest value, consisted not in his physical life, not in his epic deeds, which overshadow those of all heroic figures in history in their sweep and their grandeur—but in what he would leave behind him after the assassins had done their work. He knew that his doom was sealed, and he worked against time in order to leave everything possible to us, and through us to mankind. Throughout the eleven years of his last exile he chained himself to his desk like a galley slave and labored, as none of us knows how to labor, with such energy, such persistence and self-discipline, as only men of genius can labor. He worked against time to pour out through his pen the whole rich content of his mighty brain and preserve it in permanent written form for us, and for those who will come after us....

He was also a great man of action, to be sure. His deeds are incorporated in the greatest revolution in the history of mankind. But, unlike the opportunists and leaders of a day, his deeds were inspired by great ideas, and these ideas still live. He not only made a revolution; he wrote its history and explained the basic laws which govern all revolutions. In his *History of the Russian Revolution*, which he considered his masterpiece, he gave us a guide for the making of new revolutions, or rather, for extending throughout the world the revolution that began in October 1917.

—"To the Memory of the Old Man," *Socialist Appeal*, 7 September 1940

"Anti-Terror" Entrapment Drop the Charges Against the Newburgh Four!

On August 22, the Partisan Defense Committee sent the following letter of protest to U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder.

The Partisan Defense Committee protests the "anti-terrorism" prosecution of the "Newburgh Four." James Cromitie, David Williams, Laguerre Payen and Onta Williams, black residents of Newburgh, New York, are the victims of a classic entrapment scam—a hallmark of the FBI's post–September 11 "war on terrorism." These prosecutions set up individuals, predominantly Muslim and often black, who are overheard voicing grievances with the rampant and official racism and xenophobia that pervades this society.

The bogus charges against the Newburgh Four include "conspiracy to use weapons of mass destruction in the United States" and "conspiracy to acquire and use anti-aircraft missiles." Even the federal prosecutor in the case has said, "These guys would never in a million years have gotten Stinger missiles or bombs" and has admitted these men have no ties to any purported terrorist organization.

As has been the case with many of the "anti-terrorist" prosecutions carried out by the government, such as the frame-up arrests of seven black men in Liberty City, Florida in 2006, the "conspiracy" in question was the brainchild of an FBI informant, who lured the four men with promises of up to a quarter million dollars and a BMW car. A recent government memo, improperly withheld from the defense for months, reveals that security at Stewart Air National Guard Base were advised not to worry about a defendant seen surveying the area because he probably would try nothing without an FBI informant at his side!

The clear object of these prosecutions is to engender an atmosphere of paranoia and hysteria, especially targeting Muslims, blacks and immigrants, to better regiment the population. The Newburgh Four never should have been charged or spent a day in jail. We demand: Free the Newburgh Four: Drop the charges!■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

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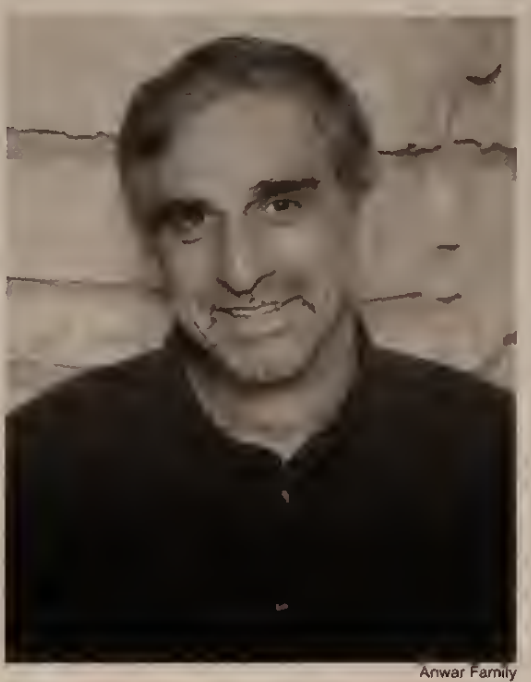
Keith Anwar



Anwar Family

1952–2010

Keith Anwar, an ardent socialist and longtime supporter of the Spartacist League, died in Oak Park, Illinois, on July 5 of an especially aggressive liver cancer that had been diagnosed barely five weeks earlier. He was 58 years old. We extend our heartfelt condolences to Keith's wife, Connie; his two children, Brian and Tessa; his brother Bruce and sister-in-law Blandine; and to his many friends, co-workers and extended family. The speed with which this disease took Keith's life has left us all stunned and deeply saddened.

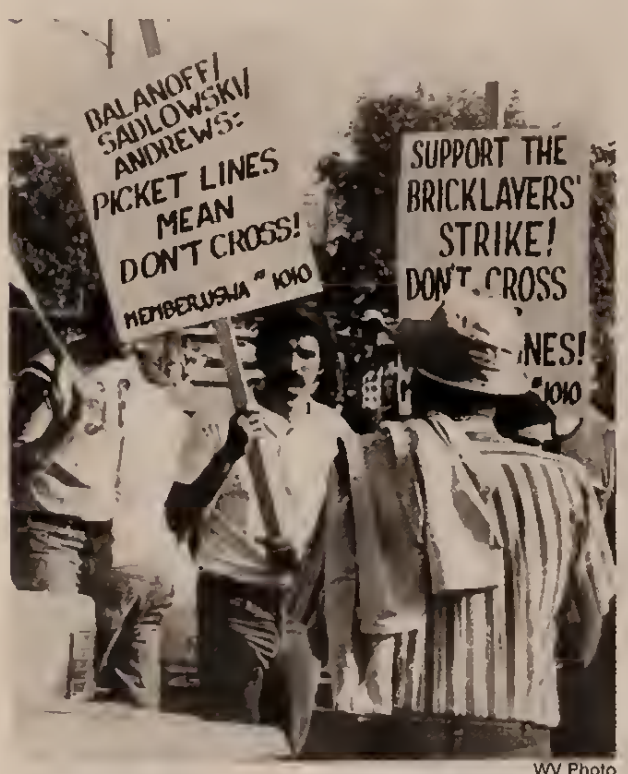
A memorial service held shortly after Keith's death drew close to 200 people, including family, Spartacist League members and supporters, former co-workers at the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) and local writers. Those who knew him well have recalled his uncompromising honesty, compassion and strength of character. As his son, Brian, poignantly pointed out at the gathering, "There are few men, few people that give more than they take. And that was Dad. He was more focused and hard-working than any person I've ever met."

Keith was a multifaceted, talented individual who dedicated his adult life to fighting against oppression and bigotry in its many manifestations. A trade-union militant and talented writer, he was a materialist, an atheist who believed that mankind made its own history. Keith understood the importance of building a revolutionary workers party, representing the interests of workers, black people and other minorities, as the necessary instrument to bring about a society where those who labor rule. Those who worked with Keith were aware of his fierce opposition to both capitalist parties, the Democrats and Republicans.

Keith came of age at a time of great radicalization and outpouring of opposition to U.S. imperialism's dirty war against the Vietnamese workers and peasants. And like many young activists at that time, he joined Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). Being the kind of guy who looked for answers and required some serious convincing, Keith took notice of *Workers Vanguard* while attending Brandeis University in the early 1970s and was won to the views of the Spartacist League. Keith moved to Chicago in the late '70s and landed a job at U.S. Steel's South Works, later becoming an apprentice millwright at Inland Steel, where he quickly became known as a fighter for labor by honoring a bricklayers strike.

In 1979, while employed at Inland and a member of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 1010, Keith refused to cross a picket of striking workers from sister Local 8180. The company reacted swiftly by firing him. A campaign to get Keith reinstated in his job, which was heavily featured in *WV* at the time, generated enormous support among steel workers in the Chicago-Gary district who understood that Keith had acted in defense of a tradition that helped build the industrial unions in this country: Picket lines mean don't cross!

The union took his case to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and won in 1982, when Inland was ordered to reinstate Keith with full back pay and seniority. Though this ruling was later overturned and Keith never got his job back, his refusal to cross picket lines earned him a great deal of authority that lasted throughout his life. Keith's ties to USWA Local 1010 were instrumental in gaining the endorsement of a number of union officials for a labor-centered, united-front demonstration initiated by the SL that mobilized 3,000 people and prevented the Nazis from attacking Chicago's Gay Pride March in June 1982. The union's vice president, Cliff "Cowboy" Mezo, joined the mobilization and spoke at the rally. In 2001, Keith got a warm welcome from his former local as he was helping organize an anti-Klan mobilization in Gary, Indiana.



WV Photo

Keith honoring Bricklayers strike picket at East Chicago Inland Steel plant, June 1978.

In 1986, Keith became a mechanic for the CTA and a member of Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 308, where he again came to be known as a union militant and outspoken opponent of racism and bigotry in all forms. In 1987, bus driver Cassandra Seay and her mother were brutally beaten by the Chicago cops in their own home and slapped with trumped-up charges, including assaulting a police officer. Keith was in the forefront of rallying support in Local 308 for the defense of Seay, a member of ATU Local 241. It was through this successful campaign that the Chicago Labor Black Struggle League was formed, and Keith was one of its founding members. In the late 1980s, Keith helped organize an integrated team of transit workers to help a black coworker move into a neighborhood that was just becoming integrated and where, the previous year, the home of a black couple who had moved in had been firebombed. The team of transit workers moved the family in and made a point to ostentatiously hang out on the front porch before leaving.

Upon hearing of Keith's death, ATU Local 308 passed a motion offering condolences and solidarity to his family, noting "his high integrity and the faithful service he rendered to humanity." Keith was instrumental in getting his union local to sign on in defense of class-war prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal and to donate repeatedly to his legal funds in the fight for freedom. Keith also helped build the Partisan Defense Committee's annual Holiday Appeal benefits, successfully soliciting contributions from his union.

Keith was politically active for over 40 years. Swimming against the stream and fighting for what you know to be right and just can be a tough job, especially in this extended period of union defeats, lack of class struggle, and political and social reaction. In the last few years of his life, he stepped back from political work and focused on his writing, approaching it with the same professionalism and seriousness that he showed in other areas. In 2004, Keith edited a second edition of *Memories of Afghanistan*, the memoirs of his father, Mohammad H. Anwar, a modernizing Afghan intellectual of the last century. Keith wrote an afterword discussing the role of the U.S. government in fostering Islamic fundamentalism and tribal backwardness in Afghanistan. He focused on Washington's support to Osama bin Laden and other reactionary *mujahedin* (holy warriors) following the 1979 entry of the Soviet Army into Afghanistan, where it fought on the side of social progress, particularly for horribly oppressed Afghan women.

Keith went on to become an active member of the Oak Park Writers Group, a network playwright at Chicago Dramatists and a member of the Dramatists' Guild. He authored several short plays, primarily political-social satires, which were given public readings by established actors. This past June, Keith won the 2010 Dionysos Cup at the Polarity Ensemble Theatre's Festival of New Plays for his script *Kabulitis*, which weaves together a story about a woman's decline into dementia and the brutal treatment of women in Afghanistan.

This touching drama of an elderly American woman in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease who is haunted by memories of Afghanistan was based on the experience of Keith's mother, Phyllis, who had joined her Afghan husband, Mohammed, in an ill-fated attempt to foster secularism and modernity in mid 20th-century Afghanistan. Phyllis was a longtime friend of the Spartacist League and a member from 1979 to 1982. As part of a 1980 national speaking tour titled "Women of the East—Proletarian Revolution or Slavery: Down With Islamic Reaction! Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" she vividly retold her experience as the first woman of her time to refuse to wear the tent-like veil on the streets of Kabul. At the risk of her life, she secretly taught girls at a school which was disguised as a hospital to fool the mullahs.

Keith never sought the spotlight, so it was easy to miss the depth of his work on so many fronts. He was comfortable in his own skin, confident in his worldview and his approach to life. An obituary for Keith in the *Chicago Tribune* (13 July) quoted a member of the Oak Park Writers Group who remarked, "Keith was a lovely writer, but was just as proud of his work repairing trains." As his son, Brian, put it at the memorial meeting, "Dad had those kind of hands. Hands that could fix a motor, or write an award-winning play."

We will never forget that within Keith's stoic sensibility and sometimes brooding style, there was an inner core of tremendous passion, will and creative ability that brought joy and sustenance to his family and friends, creative and intellectual contributions to the world and an unyielding fight on behalf of the working class. These qualities made up a man whose life made a difference in this world. He will be sorely missed. ■

Keith Anwar edited the second edition of his late father's book, *Memories of Afghanistan*, and wrote the award-winning play *Kabulitis*, which weaves together a woman's decline into dementia and the treatment of women in Afghanistan, drawing on the experiences of his mother.

Young Spartacus

For the Right of Independence!

AP

University of Puerto Rico students block main entrance of Río Piedras campus in San Juan on first day of nationwide strike, April 21.

Student Strike Shakes Puerto Rico

No Reprisals!

On June 21 students at the University of Puerto Rico (UPR), one of the largest universities in the Caribbean with eleven campuses and an enrollment of 65,000, concluded their two-month-long strike against budget cuts, tuition hikes and plans to privatize university services. The strike electrified the island and was actively supported by key sectors of the Puerto Rican working class. It intersected seething anger over Puerto Rican governor Luis Fortuño's austerity campaign, including the firing of more than 28,000 public employees since 2009, union-busting attacks on collective bargaining rights and a drive to privatize public services. Comrades from the Spartacist League/U.S. traveled to San Juan during the strike to express our support for the students' struggle in this oppressed colony of U.S. imperialism and to introduce them to our revolutionary Marxist newspaper.

The student strike successfully beat back the Puerto Rican government's and UPR administration's worst attacks: the attempts to privatize sectors of the university and eliminate tuition exemptions for students receiving Pell Grants from the U.S. government and other financial aid. While agreeing not to summarily punish strikers, the Board of Trustees left open the threat of disciplinary action against strike leaders and announced plans to implement a new special fee of at least $800 a year in January, which would increase the cost of tuition by about 50 percent. During the student assembly that ratified the settlement, students voted to strike again if the administration goes through with its plan to implement the new fee.

The Puerto Rican government was furious about the strike and viewed the outcome as a defeat. Shortly after the settlement was signed, Governor Fortuño's chief of staff dismissed the strike settlement, approved by the university administration and the students, as just "a piece of paper," in part because the students are reserving their right to strike again. In retaliation for the strike, the U.S. imperialist government—which has the whip hand over this island colony—briefly threatened to cut off some $200 million in federal student aid, most of which goes directly to students to cover their expenses.

The right-wing Fortuño government is working in tandem with the Democratic Party administration of U.S. president Barack Obama. As the chief executive officer of the capitalist class in the U.S., Obama is the overseer of the colonial oppression of Puerto Rico and the class enemy of workers around the world. Since he took office in 2009, Obama has been waging one savage attack after another against the U.S. working class, including the United Auto Workers and the teachers unions.

For its part, the UPR administration is pressing ahead on the lawsuit it filed during the strike against the student leaders. It has also initiated disciplinary actions against five strike leaders, including three members of the reformist socialist organization Unión de Juventudes Socialistas —Movimiento Socialista de Trabajadores (UJS-MST). Moreover, the administration retaliated against the campus workers who supported the strike, announcing it would charge those who honored the picket line up to $2,000 each for "days not worked." All these attacks are calculated attempts to discourage students from striking again and head off any acts of working-class solidarity. ***Drop all charges! No reprisols ogoinst the strike leoders and the campus workers and professors who honored the picket lines!***

The police brutality, notorious during the strike, has continued since the strike ended. On June 30, Puerto Rican police savagely beat students and their supporters who were protesting at the Capitol in San Juan. The gruesome images of students, particularly young women, with black eyes, cuts on their faces and bruises all over their bodies provoked a massive outcry across the island. Police superintendent José Figueroa Sancha grotesquely defended the violence meted out against the women, saying in a July 1 interview, "the women are the most aggressive ones in the group. This is an old strategy, a strategy of the guerrilla."

During our trip, one student striker told us that, on May 19, some students occupying the Río Piedras campus were debating whether to demand better wages and working conditions for cops in order to try to win their sympathy. He said this discussion came to an abrupt halt on May 20, when the police viciously attacked students, trade unionists and *independentistas* at a strike support rally at the Sheraton Hotel (see "Puerto Rico: Hands Off Campus Strikers!" *WV* No. 960, 4 June).

The police are the armed fist of the capitalist state. Their reason for existence is to defend private property, smash strikes and terrorize and repress workers, immigrants, leftists and all the oppressed, all for the purpose of maintaining the capitalist system of exploitation. They are enemies of the working class. No amount of reforms, appeals to the conscience of the police or reshuffling top-ranking police personnel will ever change that. The nationalist delusion that striking students and the cops have a common interest because "we are all Puerto Ricans" serves only to obscure these divisions and undermine the painful lessons students got during the strike on the nature of the police.

For the Unity of the Working Class!

As the principal remaining colony of U.S. imperialism, Puerto Rico suffers under the weight of national oppression and crushing poverty. The unemployment rate is 17 percent and a staggering 67 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. The working people on the island are exploited as a low-wage labor pool by U.S. capitalists seeking to maximize their profit margins. "Citizens" of the U.S. with no right to vote in federal elections and no representation in Congress, Puerto Ricans are politically dispossessed and discriminated against economically, racially and culturally.

As revolutionary internationalists, we oppose all the colonialist machinations of our "own" capitalist rulers, the common enemy of working people in the U.S. and the oppressed Puerto Rican masses. Our aim is to advance the revolutionary unity of the working class across international lines and open the way for socialist revolution throughout the Americas. We would favor independence for Puerto Rico as part of our fight against chauvinism in the United States and to undercut the bourgeois-nationalist leadership of the working class on the island. However, this is a democratic question. The sympathies of the population weigh heavily in determining how best to get the national question off the agenda and clear the road for revolutionary internationalist class struggle.

As Marxist revolutionaries we approach the question of national oppression as laid

continued on page 6

Andre Kang/Primera Hora

Indymedia

San Juan: June 30 police attack against student protest at Capitol (left) was protested by UTIER electrical workers union on July 18 (right).

What They Don't Want You to Learn...

Schomburg Library

University of Chicago

Christian Schussele

Arizona Axes Ethnic Studies, Texas Whitewashes History

What Arizona, Texas schools want to hide: the horrors of the slave trade; that "founding father" (and slaveowner) Thomas Jefferson supported separation of church and state; that U.S. invaded Mexico in 1846 and stole half of country through the Mexican-American War.

In May, Republican Arizona governor Jan Brewer signed a law that bans ethnic studies in public and charter schools, specifically targeting the Tucson school district's Mexican American studies program. This was the culmination of a years-long campaign by state school superintendent Tom Horne. The bill bans courses that "promote the overthrow of the United States government" or "promote resentment toward a race or class of people" and further strikes down any program that is "designed primarily for pupils of a particular ethnic group" or advocates "ethnic solidarity instead of the treatment of pupils as individuals." Cynically couched in terms of prohibiting discrimination, the law explicitly allows for the ethnic and racial segregation of schools under the pretext of "academic performance, including capability in the English language, that may result in a disparate impact by ethnicity."

Tucson's ethnic studies program was a result of a 1974 court suit by black and Mexican American parents to desegregate the schools. To appease parents, the school district started black studies and Mexican American studies programs. The recent ban comes on the heels of Arizona's apartheid-style SB1070 law, the anti-immigrant pass law that mandates the cops to stop and question anyone they think might be an "illegal" immigrant. Further targeting the rights of both immigrants and black people, elements of the Republican right are calling to repeal the 14th Amendment, which grants citizenship to children born on American soil and was enacted in 1868 on behalf of freed slaves and their children.

On March 12, just a few months before Brewer signed the Arizona ethnic studies law, the Texas board of education issued new guidelines for its social studies curriculum that rewrite history from the most reactionary perspective, dismissing the separation of church and state and enshrining the greatness of the "free-enterprise system." In fact, throughout the guidelines, the term "capitalism" was replaced with "free enterprise" because of what one school board member said was its "negative connotation." Most grotesquely, the guidelines promote the Confederacy's blood-soaked defense of black chattel slavery in the Civil War, including heralding Stonewall Jackson as a role model for leadership and equating Jefferson Davis with Abraham Lincoln. All *mention* of the slave trade is removed, replaced with "Atlantic triangular trade"—sounding just like the slave traders for whom millions of slaves were just commodities. Texas is one of the largest buyers of textbooks in the country, and these guidelines will likely affect publications sold throughout the U.S.

The attacks on ethnic studies in Arizona and the falsification of historical reality in Texas show how education under capitalism acts as a pillar of the bourgeois system, reinforcing the ideology and serving the interests of the racist ruling class. We defend ethnic studies courses as part of our defense of all oppressed peoples and our fight for free, quality, integrated education for all, from preschool to postgraduate. Programs like ethnic studies are the result of social struggle—especially the civil rights and Vietnam antiwar movements and other movements of the '60s and '70s—and not the largesse of the ruling class. Often designed to demobilize protest and to provide a sop to a layer of the black and Latino petty bourgeoisie, ethnic studies programs cannot end oppression. Racial and ethnic oppression are rooted in the structure and development of capitalism. It will ultimately require the overthrow of the capitalist system to end oppression—and for the real history of the struggles against oppression and exploitation to be taught.

It is particularly rich that it is Texas and Arizona—both stolen from Mexico in order to expand slavery—that are pushing these anti-Latino and anti-black "revisions." Horne specifically singled out one of the books used in Tucson schools, *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, by renowned scholar Rodolfo Acuña. "The title of the book implies to the kids that they live in occupied America, or occupied Mexico," Horne complained to the *Los Angeles Times* (12 May). The history of the state of Texas goes back to the attempt of white Southerners to extend slavery into Mexican territory. In 1845 the U.S. annexed Texas, then invaded Mexico the next year. By the time U.S. troops left Mexico in 1848, half of Mexico's national territory—including most of Arizona—was in the hands of the U.S.

The South's desire to expand slavery was a key factor that led to the Civil War (see "Mexican-American War: Prelude to American Civil War," *WV* Nos. 933 and 934, 27 March and 10 April 2009). It took the Civil War to emancipate black people from chattel slavery. But the Civil War was not carried to its completion. While black people were freed from slavery, after the defeat of Reconstruction they were stripped of political rights and economically subjugated. Black oppression remains the cornerstone of American capitalism. The Spartacist League and the Spartacus Youth Clubs fight for ***black liberation through socialist revolution! Finish the Civil War!***

As anti-immigrant hysteria and blatant anti-black racism become even more common, it is clear why much of the bourgeoisie doesn't want this history taught—and is attacking even what minimal gains have been made. Still, much of the left appeals to the capitalists to serve the interests of the oppressed. The International Socialist Organization (ISO) complains that the same Arizona state government that created SB1070 is focusing on increasing anti-immigrant repression "instead of working on legislation to address the racism and inequity in the education system" (*Socialist Worker* online, 26 May). For the ISO, the problem is that the right-wing crazies in Arizona and Texas have wreaked havoc on education. *Socialist Worker* laments that "America's pupils are in desperate need of courses that have not been whitewashed by conservative ideologues."

It is not just "conservative ideologues" that whitewash the bloody past of U.S. imperialism. While the Republicans in Arizona and Texas are certainly on the warpath, they are not alone in touting lies about history. During the 2008 presidential campaign, Barack Obama argued that "the answer to the slavery question was already embedded within our Constitution." The Constitution *protected* slavery, subjugating the free-labor North to the Southern slavocracy until the Civil War smashed slavery once and for all (see "Slavery and the Origins of American Capitalism," *WV* Nos. 942, 943 and 944, 11 and 25 September and 9 October 2009). Now, Obama, the chief overseer of the entire racist plantation of U.S. imperialism, boasts that his administration deported a record number of "illegal" immigrants in its first year. The Democrats, like the Republicans, are a capitalist party, dedicated to maintaining the system of racist American capitalism.

The ideological onslaught, which aims to mandate the teaching of absurd lies about the blood-drenched history of American capitalism and to cover up oppressed peoples' struggles, accompanies the growing segregation of American schools. More than five decades after the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court ruling that formally ended Jim Crow segregation in public schools, Northern schools are more segregated than schools in the Deep South, with blacks and Latinos attending inner-city schools that are more and more like holding pens. Court-ordered schemes to desegregate the public schools, like the one in Tucson, that at least paid lip service to integration, are now being abandoned.

While increasingly concentrated in segregated schools and barred from access to a decent education, large numbers of black and Latino youth are condemned by the racist capitalist state to rising rates of incarceration and murderous police repression. Of the 2.3 million men, women and children behind bars, 70 percent are black or Latino. According to *Colorlines* (4 November 2007), Phoenix, Arizona, is one of the worst cities for police violence, with an average of more than one person killed per month by cops from 2000 to 2007. As we wrote in "From Slavery to Mass Incarceration" (*WV* No. 955, 26 March):

> "Right now putrescent American capitalism has no need to educate working-class or poor youth; it has no room for those skilled black apprentices that filled the shipyards during World War II. Many of the black and Latino youth for whom the bourgeoisie cannot provide a future end up in prison."

This situation cries out for a class-struggle fight against racist oppression and in defense of all the oppressed. The power of the multiracial working class is one thing the bourgeoisie definitely doesn't want taught. As Marx wrote in the *Communist Manifesto*, all history is the history of class struggle. Because of its relationship to the means of production, the working class has tremendous social power. This power has been repeatedly demonstrated in Arizona, for example. From 1983 to 1986, thousands of predominantly Chicano and Native American miners battled the Phelps Dodge Corporation in southern Arizona. Phelps Dodge—which amassed its initial capital from the 19th-century slave trade—only defeated the workers with the help of massive state repression, overseen by Democratic governor Bruce Babbitt (see "Class War in Arizona Copper Mines," *WV* No. 357, 22 June 1984). Students and racial and ethnic minorities must unite with the working class in order to ***make history***, overthrowing this racist, oppressive system once and for all.■

Puerto Rico...

(continued from page 4)

out by V.I. Lenin, whose Bolsheviks led the revolutionary Russian proletariat to the conquest of power in 1917:

> "The proletariat of the oppressor nations... must struggle against the enforced retention of oppressed nations within the bounds of the given state, which means that they must fight for the right to self-determination. The proletariat must demand freedom of political separation for the colonies and nations oppressed by 'their own' nation. Otherwise, the internationalism of the proletariat would be nothing but empty words....
>
> "On the other hand, the socialists of the oppressed nations must, in particular, defend and implement the full and unconditional unity, including organisational unity, of the workers of the oppressed nation and those of the oppressor nation. Without this it is impossible to defend the independent policy of the proletariat and their class solidarity.... The bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations persistently utilise the slogans of national liberation to deceive the workers."
>
> —"The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination," January-February 1916

Standing in active solidarity with the oppressed colonial masses of Puerto Rico, we give no political support to nationalist bourgeois and petty-bourgeois forces.

For Free, Quality Education for All!

In discussions with the students occupying the campus, our comrades emphasized the necessity of linking their struggle in defense of public education to the power of the working class, in Puerto Rico and in the United States. We pointed out that free, quality public education for all cannot be fully achieved under capitalism. By its very nature, capitalism is based on maximizing the profits for the capitalists at the expense of the interests of the workers and all the oppressed. The capitalists' only interest in providing education and other social services to the working people is to secure their own profits. The only way to create a free, egalitarian society based on material abundance, where education is truly the right of all, is through socialist revolution to sweep away the decaying capitalist system in the belly of the U.S. imperialist beast as well as in the oppressed colonies and neocolonies. Our aim is to win students to the side of the working class by building a vanguard workers party that can provide revolutionary, internationalist leadership for that struggle.

By themselves, students lack social power. Nothing stops moving when the students don't go to class. In contrast, the proletariat—those who work in the factories, mines, transportation and other industries and produce the wealth in society—has the power to hit the capitalists in the wallet by withholding its labor. One student recognized this fact, noting that after 43 days on strike, the students had not yet won anything. However, he told us, the public buildings workers union threatened to strike when the government announced layoffs, and one day later the government backed down.

Although limited by the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracies' efforts to maintain class peace, working-class support was instrumental in deterring the government and university administration from breaking the strike. A coalition of Puerto Rican public employees unions carried out a one-day strike on May 18 in support of the students' demands. When police blockaded the Río Piedras campus to starve out the strikers, workers tossed bags of food and bottles of water over the cops' heads to the students occupying the campus. Together with parents and other strike supporters, at key points in the strike union members kept watch at the front gates of the campus to deter police provocations. These workers had a direct interest in the success of the strike, which meant the defense of their kids' chance to get an education and, in the case of the campus workers, defense of their jobs.

Instead of looking to the working class as the only class with the objective interest and potential social power to fight the austerity measures, the student leaders have sought allies in the capitalist Puerto Rican colonial government. The purpose of the June 30 demonstration at the Capitol, which the police savagely attacked, was to read a declaration to the legislators demanding "that they promise to watch over the interests of the People" ("'Retomarán' el Capitolio," www.upresunpais.org). But the Puerto Rican capitalists and the imperialist masters they depend on, not the students, are the "people" whose interests Puerto Rico's bourgeois politicians watch over. This is true not only of Fortuño's widely despised pro-statehood New Progressive Party (PNP), but also the Popular Democratic Party (PPD) that favors maintaining the current colonial status of Puerto Rico. Although the PPD hypocritically denounced the violent repression of June 30 and claimed to support the students during the strike, the previous PPD government carried out its own attacks against social struggles, among other things decertifying the Puerto Rican Teachers Federation union after its nationwide strike in 2008.

Bettmann

Puerto Rican National Guard arrested more than 3,000 in crackdown on independence fighters in 1950.

We are for open admissions to the university, no tuition and a state-paid living stipend for all students, including the undocumented immigrants from other Caribbean nations who are largely frozen out of access to an education at UPR. Increased access to education and other social gains will be won only through struggle, not by advising the Puerto Rican capitalist government on ways to curb tax evasion and urging it to institute sliding-scale tuition rates, as the UJS-MST proposes in the leaflet they distributed during the strike (see "La evasión contributiva y la matrícula ajustada a los ingresos," *Al Medio*, 16 September 2005).

For the Right of Independence for Puerto Rico!

Although the two largest U.S. military bases, Vieques and Roosevelt Roads, have closed, the Coast Guard, National Guard and other U.S. troops still remain on the island. In addition, 1,192 federal law enforcement agents (including the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Agency and Immigration and Customs Enforcement) rain terror on the population, especially Dominican and other immigrants and poor and working people, as part of the U.S. government's racist "war on drugs." Throughout the history of U.S. colonial occupation, federal agents have viciously targeted Puerto Rican *independentistas* for imprisonment and political assassination, most recently in the FBI's 2005 assassination of Los Macheteros cofounder Filiberto Ojeda Ríos (see "Protest FBI Killing of Filiberto Ojeda Ríos!" *WV* No. 856, 14 October 2005). We demand freedom for Puerto Rican independence activists Oscar López Rivera and Avelino González Claudio who are imprisoned in the U.S. *All U.S. troops and federal agents out of Puerto Rico now!*

Puerto Ricans have deeply contradictory feelings about independence—at this time, a large majority of the population does not call for it—and we do not advocate that independence be forced on them. With colonial "commonwealth" status comes the right to live and work on the mainland. Today half of Puerto Ricans reside there, and the desire to freely travel and work in the U.S. is one factor behind their ambivalence. While the island's residents are deeply impoverished in comparison with the U.S. mainland, their standard of living is higher than the norm for the Caribbean. So, for example, one striker we spoke to at Río Piedras said that she would like to see an independent Puerto Rico, but doesn't favor independence at this time for economic reasons. She pointed out that one of the reasons UPR students went on strike was to defend the right of students receiving Pell Granf money to continue paying no tuition. The U.S. federal Pell Grant is a minuscule crumb, but it makes access to higher education possible for thousands of Puerto Ricans.

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The Puerto Rican population that lives in the U.S., much of it integrated into strategic sectors of the proletariat, provides a living link between the Puerto Rican masses and the proletariat in the United States. As we wrote in the Programmatic Statement of the Spartacist League/U.S., we do not know whether U.S. colonial oppression would be ended

> "through a revolutionary socialist upheaval in the U.S. or through the militant proletariat in Puerto Rico inspiring struggle on the mainland. Our call for a socialist federation(s) of the Caribbean projects our general conception for workers rule in the area; however, we do not know at this point how this will transpire in the concrete. In any case, a victorious workers revolution in the U.S. would immediately free Puerto Rico and all other nations subjugated by U.S. imperialism and establish relations with them on the basis of their freedom to exercise their national self-determination."

MAS, MST, OSI: Reformist Obstacles to Revolution

For Marxists, opposition to capitalist parties, including the bourgeois Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP), is a matter of principle. While it has never controlled the government, the PIP bases its program on the maintenance of capitalism. The cutting edge of our program in Puerto Rico is against nationalist forces that seek to derail proletarian struggle through false "unity" between the Puerto Rican bourgeoisie and working class.

During our trip to Puerto Rico, one student aptly characterized the various ostensibly socialist groups at UPR as *independentistas* with a little socialism sprinkled in. One example is the Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS), a fake-socialist organization formed in 2008 by a fusion of members of Taller de Formación Política, a vaguely Trotskyoid academic collective, the nationalist Partido Revolutionario de los Trabajadores (PRT-Macheteros) and others. At its founding conference on 14 September 2008, MAS voted to support and actively campaign for the PIP in the elections.

A 2008 article by Alma Torres of the social-democratic Organización Socialista Internacional (OSI), which has ties to the International Socialist Organization in the U.S., explained the PIP's plans to develop capitalism in Puerto Rico. Torres detailed how the PIP seeks to break the islands's economic dependence on the U.S. by soliciting investments from the World Bank, the IMF and the Interamerican Development Bank—all of which are tools of the U.S. imperialists. The article called for no vote to any of the parties running in the elections; however, this same article gives the OSI's game away. The OSI offers to support the PIP if only the PIP includes in its platform the demand to raise the minimum wage: "If the PIP would propose an increase to the minimum wage, that would be a powerful reason for rethinking the possibility of campaigning for the PIP" ("Entre votar y quedarse calla'o ¿qué decimos los socialistas?" www.socialismointernacional.org, 2 November 2008).

The students at the June 3 UJS-MST forum we attended debated the question of independence for Puerto Rico. UJS-MST speakers advocated independence as a necessary prerequisite to socialist revolution. In response, one striker argued that independence under capitalism would just mean more of the same. Another striker asked how the UJS-MST is going to tell the nearly 50 percent of Puerto Ricans who desire statehood that they can't fight for socialism unless they first support independence?

The UJS-MST subordinates the interests of the working class and the struggle for socialism to the goal of making the Puerto Rican capitalists the "independent" rulers of the island. During the 2008 elections, the UJS-MST ran an article calling for a vote to the PIP with a disclaimer that this was not the line of their organization. After the PIP lost the elections, they ran another article bemoaning the PIP's loss of representation in the Puerto Rican House of Representatives and Senate! (See "El MINH 'negociará' su respaldo a los colonialistas," www.bandera.org, 15 September 2008 and "Pierden fanquicia electoral y representantes," www.bandera.org, 16 November 2008.)

Defend the Cuban Deformed Workers State!

In contrast to other Latin American countries where the left typically enthuses uncritically over Fidel Castro, at the University of Puerto Rico both the MST and the OSI oppose the Cuban government from the right—a position that sometimes leads them to support the counterrevolutionary efforts of U.S. imperialism. Though scandalous, this is not illogical. Reformist organizations orient to bourgeois forces, seeking to pressure them to behave better. An anti-Cuba line is, accordingly, convenient for reformist leftists to espouse, since the Puerto Rican capitalist parties—the PNP, PPD and PIP—and the American rulers are hostile to Cuba on a class basis.

The Cuban Revolution drove the U.S. and Cuban capitalists off the island and resulted in enormous social gains, including full literacy, free health care and free higher education. In January 1959, Fidel Castro's petty-bourgeois guerrillas overthrew the brutal neocolonial dictatorship of the U.S. puppet Fulgencio Batista. Their purely bourgeois-democratic aims—purging the state apparatus of Batista supporters, agrarian reform, greater national independence—brought them into direct conflict with U.S. imperialism and its Cuban lackeys. The U.S. imperialists responded to Castro's program of land redistribution and the measures taken against Batista's police torturers with brute economic pressure to bring Castro's regime to heel.

Facing unrelenting pressure from the U.S. imperialists only 90 miles away, the Castro government sought the military protection of the Soviet Union. The Cuban economy continued to function under the imperialists' assault only because the USSR came to its aid, taking Cuban sugar in exchange for oil and essential military products. In 1960-61, in response to U.S. economic warfare, the Castro regime expropriated the holdings of the U.S. imperialists—National City Bank, United Fruit, Standard Oil, the sugar barons and the Mafia—as well as the Cuban bourgeoisie. The Cuban capitalists either fled into exile or were imprisoned.

Cuba became a bureaucratically deformed workers state in which capitalism had been overthrown, but political power was held by a parasitic bureaucratic caste that fundamentally shares the nationalist political program of "socialism in one country" of the former Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union. In Cuba, this anti-revolutionary dogma is expressed in the fantasy that socialism can be built on

Wide World

Cuban militiaman guards U.S. oil refinery expropriated in 1960.

one island. The Castro regime has always been hostile to the program and perspective of international proletarian revolution. Instead, it has promoted "progressive" bourgeois formations from the Allende popular-front government in Chile in the early 1970s, which paved the way to a reactionary coup and a bloodbath of the workers, to the national-populist regime of Venezuela's Hugo Chávez today.

Because the working class lacked the leadership of a sizable revolutionary Marxist political party and did not act as a contender for political power, the creation of a healthy workers state in Cuba was not possible. Instead of a regime based on workers democracy, the Cuban workers state was deformed from its beginnings by the total lack of workers' and peasants' control over the apparatus that administers the state and the economy. As Trotskyists, we stand for the unconditional military defense of the Cuban deformed workers state against internal capitalist counterrevolution and U.S. imperialist attack. At the same time, we fight for workers political revolution to oust the corrupt, anti-Marxist and anti-working-class Castro bureaucracy in Cuba and to establish workers democracy under the Leninist-Trotskyist banner of international socialist revolution. We take the same approach toward the bureaucratically deformed workers states of China, North Korea and Vietnam.

For its part, the OSI states in its declaration "¿Por qué lucha la OSI?" ("What Does the OSI Fight For?"): "The so-called 'socialist' countries like China, Cuba, and the former Soviet Union have nothing to do with socialism. They are state capitalist regimes in which the state bureaucracy exploits its working class just like the private and state bosses do here in Puerto Rico." It is obscene for the OSI to equate Puerto Rico—a capitalist colony of U.S. imperialism—with Cuba and China, countries where the imperialists and the native bourgeoisies were driven out and the means of production remain largely collectivized even today, however bureaucratically mismanaged they are by the parasitic Stalinist regimes. The same anti-revolutionary theory of state capitalism is what led the OSI's international co-thinkers to hail the Soviet Union's destruction (see "The Bankruptcy of 'New Class' Theories," *Spartacist* [English-language edition], No. 55, Autumn 1999).

The UJS-MST uses a picture of Che Guevara on the masthead of its Web site. It claims to oppose the U.S. blockade against Cuba and to uphold Cuba's right to defend itself against U.S. attack. But, in addition to military threats and economic strangulation, the imperialists also seek to foment counterrevolution in Cuba and the other deformed workers states by encouraging the growth of forces within those countries that promote the restoration of capitalism.

The Varela project, funded and supported by the U.S. State Department, the National Endowment for Democracy and the Catholic church, is an example. Named after a 19th-century Cuban priest, it was launched around the time of Pope John Paul II's 1998 visit to Cuba and later promoted by former U.S. president Jimmy Carter—both of whom Castro treacherously welcomed to the island. Our opposition to the Varela project petition centered on its demands for "'free elections and the right to private enterprise'—demands that amount to a call for 'democratic' counterrevolution, the 'electoral' rise to power of capitalist-restorationist forces financed by American imperialist largesse, which would be accompanied by a bloodbath of workers and Communists" ("Defend the Cuban Revolution!" *WV* No. 805, 6 June 2003).

The MST *supported* the U.S.-backed Varela petition. MST leader Luis Ángel Torres Torres described the Varela campaign as offering "democratizing possibilities," adding that it "can serve as an example to other sectors and multiply the resistance actions against the state" ("El Proyecto Varela y la crisis Cubana," www.bandera.org, 14 October 2002). This is exactly what the imperialists are hoping for.

In contrast to the narrow nationalism and the anti-communist, reformist politics of these organizations, we seek to win youth over to our internationalist, proletarian revolutionary program. Key to this is exposing illusions in bourgeois democracy, which is based on the exploitation of the working class and, in the United States, on racial oppression of black people and imperialist depredation around the world. For the multiracial proletariat in the U.S., the fight to defend Puerto Rico's right to independence is integrally linked to its struggle against the American bourgeoisie. It is necessary as well to mobilize the working class in the U.S. and Puerto Rico in defense of the Cuban Revolution. Only world socialist revolution, laying the basis for international socialist planning, can open the road to qualitative economic development for the countries which are today under the imperialist boot. ■

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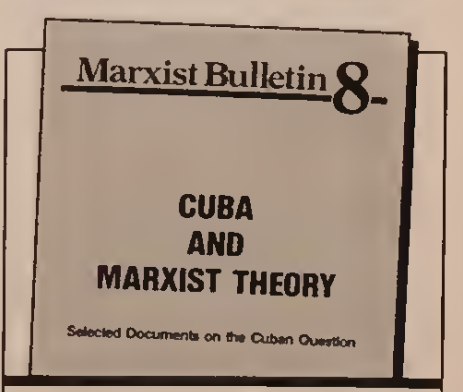

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Shirley Sherrod Thrown Under the Bus

Obama: CEO of Racist American Capitalism

Shirley Sherrod's forced resignation from her USDA (Department of Agriculture) post on July 19 was but the latest slap in the face to America's black population by the Obama administration. Sherrod's departure also caused no small amount of distress for Democratic Party liberals, black spokesmen and the reformist left, all of whom had sold the lie that Obama's ascension to office marked a historic turning point in the struggle of the black masses against their oppression. Based on a phony report of supposedly racist remarks made by Sherrod at an NAACP event in March concerning a 24-year-old incident—a report issued by the notorious con man and Tea Party demagogue Andrew Breitbart—Obama's administration instantly swung into action, browbeating Sherrod by phone, while she was driving her car, into immediately submitting her resignation with her Blackberry.

The NAACP under its president Ben Jealous promptly endorsed this action. Having been chastised about its complaints of overt Tea Party racism, the NAACP took pains to remove any taint of supposed "reverse racism," intoning: "Racism is about the abuse of power. Sherrod had it in her position at USDA. According to her remarks, she mistreated a white farmer in need of assistance because of his race. We are appalled by her actions, just as we are with abuses of power against farmers of color and female farmers." A couple of days later, when the report was revealed to be a Tea Party fraud and the white farmer spoke out in Sherrod's defense, the administration and the NAACP raced to apologize to the one-time civil rights activist. Sherrod has since accepted their apologies while refusing the administration's offer of another government job.

The Tea Party is simply the most recent manifestation of good old American racist, nativist reaction. The Tea Party's roots go back to the racist backlash against the limited gains for blacks and women that resulted from the civil rights movement and other social upheavals of the 1960s. As we wrote in Part One of "Economic Crisis and the Capitalist State" (*WV* No. 961, 2 July):

> "That backlash eventually took the form of opposition to 'big government'—identified with court-ordered racial integration in the public schools, giving jobs to blacks and women under affirmative action programs and handing out welfare money to poor black women and their children (a demagogic lie since relatively few government funds went to the poor, black or white). This boiled over into the 'tax revolt' of the late 1970s...which propelled Ronald Reagan into the White House and began the ascendancy of the Republican right in national politics."

For some time it has been the norm in bourgeois politics to portray programs offering even the tiniest amelioration of the black masses' wretched conditions as "reverse discrimination," with the corollary that blacks are painted as "racist" for protesting discrimination and deprivation. Now, with a black man as president and in the context of the economic woes that are ravaging most Americans (and especially black people), and with no appreciable social struggle to try to offset those woes, racist reactionaries feel less and less constrained to hide behind the fiction of "reverse discrimination."

Ryan/NY Times

Evicted tenant with belongings on Milwaukee street last winter.

Shortly before the March 20 Congressional vote on Obama's health care bill, Tea Party protesters yelled the "N" word at civil rights veteran John Lewis and other black Congressmen and spat on another while confronting openly gay Congressman Barney Frank with homophobic slurs. Laura Schlessinger's recent efforts to capture the Guinness record for use of the "N" word on the radio; South Carolina Senator Lindsey Graham's proposal to modify the 14th Amendment, which gave citizenship to black freedmen following the Civil War, so that U.S.-born children of immigrants are excluded from citizenship; the recent Tea Party anti-immigrant mobilization on the Arizona-Mexico border: all are testimony to the exacerbation of open racist/white chauvinism fueled by these types. To take as good coin reports of black "racism" from such sources is not that far from accepting a fascist exposé of bloodless Christian babies found in the basements of synagogues.

It is no less guileless to accept Obama's pretense that he was unaware of the actions taken to dump Sherrod. He has bent over backward to address each and every complaint from these quarters, ditching the Rev. Jeremiah Wright for excoriating American racism at the beginning of his campaign and firing Van Jones, a black administration official who dared to proclaim the innocence of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, last year. Nor should one forget Obama's attempt, over a cold one, to educate Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates Jr. and the cop who rousted him for attempting to enter his own home, in the Miss Manners approach to black-police community relations. That was an attempt to placate the nationwide outrage from law enforcement officials over the president's initial statement that the cop had acted stupidly. At least the relatives of Oscar Grant—a young black worker killed in cold blood by a white transit cop in Oakland in 2009—were spared Obama's revolting pieties.

Reuters

April 2009: Racist yahoos, bible-thumpers at "Tax Day Tea Party" in Nashville.

There were outcries of protest over Sherrod's firing from those who have promoted Obama. Perhaps none of those were more apologetic for Obama's rush to judgment than that of black author and political commentator Earl Ofari Hutchinson. "If Obama talked candidly about race and tried to spark a dialogue on race as some clamor for him to do," Hutchinson wrote in a 22 July Internet posting, "it would turn his administration into a referendum on race. This would turn the GOP and tea party counterinsurgency into a red hot fire. Obama's rush to judgment on Sherrod had nothing to do with fear and only tangentially with a terrible misread of the information about her purported racial statement. It had everything to do with the price of White House governance. The price is a politically constricted, race neutral presidency." Thus black people are told that the price they must pay for Obama's ascendancy to the White House is, simply, to shut up and take it.

Few commentaries were more poignant than that of black *New York Times* columnist Bob Herbert, who wrote in a 23 July op-ed piece titled "Thrown to the Wolves": "Black people are in a terrible condition right now—economically, socially, educationally and otherwise—and there is no effective champion fighting for their interests. Mr. Jealous and the new edition of the N.A.A.C.P. have shown in this episode that they are not ready for prime time, and President Obama seems reluctant to even utter the word black. Or poor, for that matter." The answer posed by Herbert was considerably less than inspiring: "There is no way we'll overcome those divisions if people who should know better keep bowing before and kowtowing to the toxic agenda of those on the right whose overriding goal is to foment hostility and hate."

The liberals who promoted Obama for the presidency wish he would pay them more attention and hang with them, perhaps while shooting some hoops. The fake socialists, who touted him as an agent of positive change, want to force him to do the right thing. The International Socialist Organization (ISO) and other reformists are publicizing the "One Nation" march on Washington on October 2, a mobilization being heavily built by the pro-capitalist AFL-CIO union bureaucracy. The call for that action pompously proclaims that the march will "charge up an army of tens of thousands of activists who will return to their neighborhoods, churches, schools and, especially, voting booths, with new energy to enact our common agenda. And on the same day, the labor movement will walk door-to-door in targeted states around the country, bringing the same message to union members exactly one month before the fall elections."

The ISO, in an article by Keeanga Yamahtta Taylor in *Socialist Worker* (28 July), intones: "Without a politically independent, activist challenge to the right-wing lies and distortions about racism—and the liberal acquiescence to them—the

Tea Party: Spearhead of Racist Reaction

right will continue to shape and dominate the debates and discussions about racism. And that will make it impossible to have 'civil and human rights in this country'." These fight-the-right sentiments were expressed in the same fashion by the same liberals and leftish groups two years ago during Obama's campaign. This political stutter is no accident. The bourgeois liberals and their left hangers-on are the apostles of reforming the racist, blood-soaked American imperialist order, and they display the persistence of Pepe Le Pew in their pursuit of this fantasy.

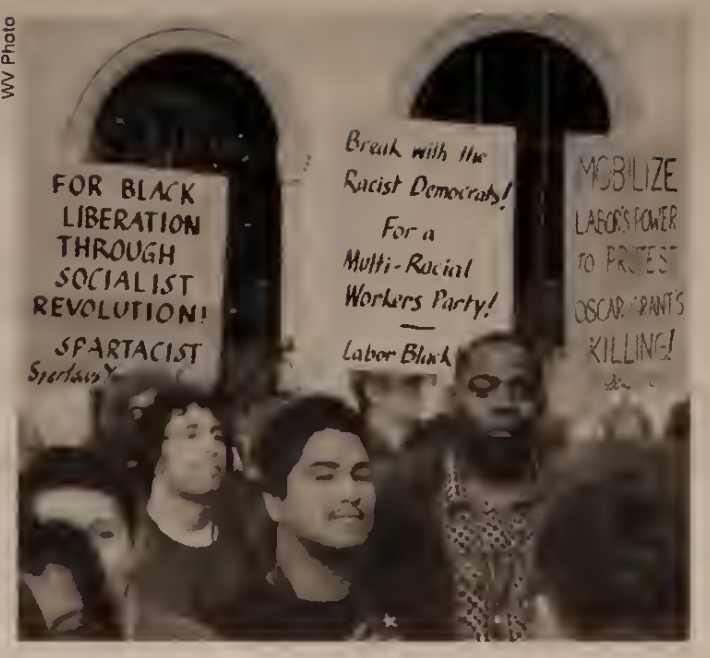
To be sure, there seems to be no compromise or concession this president will not consider. But it is not his lack of spine that renders him bankrupt in dealing with the agonies faced by working and black people. Obama, America's first black president, was elected after decades during which social struggle withered and militant strike activity all but disappeared. According to him, the racial oppression of black people has been all but completely put to rest by the changes conceded to the civil rights movement during the Lyndon Johnson presidency. The only change Obama has offered in U.S. imperialism's wars of conquest has been to select a different one to focus on. Meanwhile those facing the vicissitudes of the grinding depression are offered nothing, while the bankers are assured of salvation.

Obama may compare poorly to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, although in reality the immediate impact of their respective anti-depression measures is comparable. Neither significantly addressed the plight of America's toiling and poor people, although Roosevelt's occasional demagogic critiques of the fat cats gave some solace to capitalism's unfortunate victims. Obama simply is what he is, his skin color notwithstanding: the overseer of the most deadly and exploitative imperialist order on the planet.

Following his election, we wrote in "Obama: CEO of Bankrupt American Capitalism" (*WV* No. 930, 13 February 2009): "The bourgeoisie will hardly spend money on improving the condition of the masses unless it is forced to do so. Especially since the counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union in 1991-92, capitalists internationally have sought to increase their competitiveness against their rivals by taking an ax to whatever gains workers have been able to achieve." Shortly before, Obama had given an interview to the *Washington Post* (16 January 2009), which reported his intention "to rein in health-care costs, stabilize Social Security and prevent the Medicare program from bankrupting the government."

It is Obama's job as chief executive of the U.S. capitalist state to administer the race/caste oppression of black people that is built into this country's economy and is invaluable to the rulers as an obstacle to unified struggle against the predatory capitalist order. That order must be combated by working-class and social struggle. It must be overthrown through proletarian socialist revolution. But it must be remembered that during the massive strikes of the 1930s and the social struggles of the 1950s and '60s, the predecessors of today's liberals and reformists no less than now plied their trade: the binding of the outraged masses to the reform pretenses and candidates of the Democratic Party, then and now the other main party of the bosses' rule.

It requires the forging of an internationalist, revolutionary Trotskyist working-class party to relentlessly expose the treachery of the would-be reformers of capitalist anarchy and to lead the working class and dispossessed to consign imperialism to the graveyard of history. And in this country, the main banner of such a party must be: Finish the Civil War! For black freedom through socialist revolution!■



WV Photo

Oakland, July 8: Spartacist supporters at protest against verdict in racist cop killing of Oscar Grant.

Mania...

(continued from page 1)

help the Republicans win back control of the House and Senate to march at the head of the anti-Muslim frenzy. Up to a fifth of Americans appear to have bought the tale that Barack Obama is a secret Muslim, which is about as much an affront to the racists as his (very real) black skin. In the *New York Times* (21 August), liberal columnist Frank Rich caught the manufactured quality of the hoopla over a "mosque" being built on "the 'hallowed ground' of a shuttered Burlington Coat Factory store one block from the New York Dolls Gentlemen's Club," where strippers have backed the building of the community center. Rich noted that the yahoos "have never attacked the routine Muslim worship services at another site of the 9/11 attacks, the Pentagon."

Both the Democratic and Republican parties are split on the "anti-mosque" furor. New Jersey Republican governor Chris Christie, taking a brief break from bashing the teachers unions, has joined some Democrats in refusing to condemn the Cordoba community center. Meanwhile, Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid, whose Senate seat is being contested by a Tea Party Republican, has lectured that the center's founder, Feisal Abdul Rauf, should build the community center "somewhere else." Reid was echoed by Democratic New York governor David Paterson, who is aiming to offer state property far from "Ground Zero" as an alternative site. NYC mayor Michael Bloomberg has strenuously backed the Islamic center, but he has little to lose. He has had high voter approval ratings, he's not standing for reelection and he's richer than Croesus, which has helped him do things like change parties and extend term limits. But just a few years ago, Bloomberg saw to it that Yemeni immigrant Debbie Almontaser was fired from her job as principal of the Khalil Gibran International Academy in Brooklyn in the heat of a media frenzy falsely branding her a Muslim fundamentalist.

Barack Obama's backing of the Cordoba center particularly galvanized the forces of right-wing reaction. Sections of the ruling class fret that the outbreak of open anti-Islamic bigotry is undermining American interests in the Near East and especially Afghanistan. As Frank Rich put it in his *Times* column: "How do you win Muslim hearts and minds in Kandahar when you are calling Muslims every filthy name in the book in New York?"

On August 13, Obama stated at a White House Ramadan ceremony that he defends the planned Islamic center in lower Manhattan, although in now-typical fashion he backpedaled the next day after getting flak from some Democrats as well as Republicans. Obama has reason to go to bat for Feisal Abdul Rauf. Painted by the Fox News rabble as a "terrorist supporter," the Sufi imam has served U.S. imperialism under both Bush II and Obama, repeatedly traveling to the Near East to preach the virtues of American "democracy." In 2008 he signed on to a report with former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Richard Armitage, Deputy Secretary of State in the Bush administration, declaring that the "war on terror" had not been adequate in improving U.S. "security." In 2003, he addressed a New York FBI meeting to give agents "sensitivity" training after they were criticized for abusing Arab Americans in the post-September 11 witchhunts!

Abdul Rauf is Washington's go-to "good" Muslim, to be called upon when the bourgeoisie wishes to cover its imperialist depredations with talk of tolerance, liberty and other supposed "American values." The imam is currently on a three-country tour of the Persian Gulf sponsored by the U.S. State Department. His appearance in this area serves to shore up America's Arab client states against the reactionary Iranian regime. Washington has repeatedly targeted Iran with economic sanctions and has provocatively set up "missile defense" batteries in Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

The same Obama administration that today intones pieties about "religious freedom" threatened last November to seize mosques and other U.S. properties, including a 36-story Manhattan skyscraper, held by the Iranian-backed Alavi Foundation on the grounds that the money it obtained for developing the properties violated U.S. laws banning trade with Iran. We oppose the government's moves against the Alavi Foundation, which pose grave implications for the rights of freedom of religion and association. We oppose as well the whole framework of sanctions against Iran, behind which is the threat of war. *U.S. hands off Iran!*

Defeat Imperialism Through Workers Revolution!

Following the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, we dubbed the forces around Osama bin Laden Washington's Frankenstein's monster. Bin Laden was among the many beneficiaries of the massive U.S. aid given to Islamic *mujahedin* cutthroats who were embraced by the imperialists for their murderous anti-Communism. These "holy warriors" fought against the modernizing left-nationalist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) beginning in 1978 and subsequently against Soviet troops after they came to the aid of the embattled PDPA in 1979. The Soviet military intervention opened the possibility of social liberation for the Afghan masses, particularly women, while the threat of a CIA-backed Islamic takeover on the USSR's southern flank posed the need for unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state.

We Trotskyists proclaimed: *Hail Red Army! Extend the social gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples!* The Soviet withdrawal in 1988-89 was a political betrayal by the Stalinist bureaucracy under Mikhail Gorbachev, opening the door to capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR itself in 1991-92. In the bloody years after the *mujahedin* finally took Kabul in 1992, re-enslaving Afghan women and reducing the capital, Kabul, to rubble, the Taliban emerged as the leading force in Afghanistan. U.S. imperialism supported the Pakistani-backed Taliban from 1996 until they drove them from power in the 2001 U.S./NATO invasion. With no more need for its former clients, Washington withdrew its support for the Taliban, bin Laden & Co. On 11 September 2001, bin Laden bit back.

The International Communist League fought to the end in defense of the Soviet Union against the forces of capitalist counterrevolution. In today's world, where the destruction of the Soviet Union removed what had been the main deterrent to U.S. imperialism's bloody global ambitions, we rededicate ourselves to the fight to construct workers parties of the Bolshevik type in the struggle for new October Revolutions. As we wrote in "Down With Obama's War in Afghanistan!" (*WV* No. 942, 11 September 2009):

> "The horrors produced by U.S. imperialism's 'holy war' against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, as well as the present occupation of the country, show once again that the capitalist system is a barrier to social progress and a breeding ground for barbaric reaction. Our purpose is the forging of a multiracial revolutionary workers party that fights for the defeat of U.S. imperialism through socialist revolution."■

CORRECTIONS

The article "Italy: Unions Must Defend and Organize Immigrant Workers!" (*WV* No. 961, 2 July) contained a factual error due to a mistake in the translation. In discussing a roundup of workers, we wrote that "police 'evacuated' some 100,000 workers, locking them up in hundreds of Centers for Identification and Expulsion (CIE)." In fact, 1,100 workers were "evacuated" and hundreds of them locked up.

In the article "In Honor of Comrade Joe Verret" (*WV* No. 962, 30 July), we incorrectly attributed to comrade Verret authorship of the Spartacist League leaflet "Moscow Trials in New Orleans." It was in fact written by another comrade.

Programmatic Statement of the Spartacist League/U.S.

Adopted in 1999 at the Tenth National Conference of the SL/U.S.

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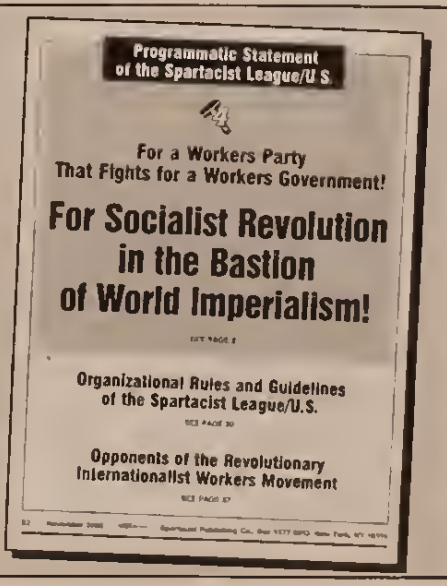

Palestinians...

(continued from page 16)

force for "democracy" anywhere in the world. The disinvestment that did occur largely took the form of overseas corporations signing over their interests to local subsidiaries, which often treated their workers even more brutally. Indeed, 1989 saw strikes by black oil and rubber workers in South Africa against such disinvestment schemes. As we wrote in "Black Workers Strike Against 'Divestment' Union-Busting" (*Workers Vanguard* No. 486, 29 September 1989), "The only kind of 'divestment' that will benefit the exploited and oppressed will be proletarian revolution, and the expropriation of these riches by a black-centered workers government as part of a socialist federation of southern Africa." That remains no less true today, as ANC leaders like Jacob Zuma continue to serve as black front men for a ***neo-apartheid*** capitalist system whose fundamental character, including enormous disparities between racial groups, has remained intact.

Workers Hammer

Banner at June 5 London protest expresses politics of Israel "boycott, divestment, sanctions" movement, which breeds illusions in "democratic" imperialists.

For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

The Spartacist League and other sections of the International Communist League intervened into the recent protests against the Zionist attacks on the flotilla to express our solidarity with the Palestinian masses and to put forward the only perspective—international socialist revolution—that can put an end to Palestinian national oppression. The myriad peoples of the Near East will not know peace, justice or prosperity until bourgeois rule in the region is overthrown through a series of socialist revolutions. As revolutionaries in Britain, solidarity with the oppressed in neocolonial countries means first and foremost opposing our own ruling class and fighting to bring down British imperialism through socialist revolution at home.

The hideous oppression of the Palestinians today, including the siege of Gaza, is an expression of the barbaric rule of capitalist imperialism and Zionist nationalism. For more than 60 years, Palestinians have suffered under the jackboot of Zionist Israel—an oppression that has intensified since the 1991-92 counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union. The collapse of the USSR, which acted as a counterweight to U.S. imperialism internationally, deprived the late Yasir Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) of crucial diplomatic and financial support, paving the way for the ignominious 1993 U.S. imperialism-sponsored Oslo "peace" accords, establishing the Palestinian Authority as the Zionists' police auxiliaries in the Occupied Territories. In an article headlined "Israel-PLO Deal for Palestinian Ghetto" we wrote that this deal "does not offer even the most deformed expression of self-determination" and "would place the PLO's seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses" (*Workers Hammer* No. 137, September/October 1993 [reprinted from *WV* No. 583, 10 September 1993]). It was this betrayal by the secular-nationalist PLO that paved the way for the rise of reactionary Islamic groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad among the Palestinians.

Since Oslo, one "peace" accord after another has been heralded as opening the door to Palestinian national emancipation. In reality, Zionist oppression of the Palestinians has only intensified, leading to ever deadlier cycles of terror against the Palestinian population. Israel's rulers have increasingly driven the Palestinians into bantustan-like enclaves demarcated by a heavily guarded wall and sliced up by Zionist settlements, checkpoints and bypass highways. Gaza is little more than a concentration camp: an impoverished, devastated strip where 1.5 million Palestinians are trapped, surrounded by the sea, an electrified fence and a wall sealing its border with Egypt. ***All Zionist troops and settlers out of the West Bank and East Jerusalem!***

Both the Palestinian and Hebrew-speaking nations have the right to self-determination, but because the two nations are geographically interpenetrated, self-determination for one can only be achieved by denying it to the other. Under capitalism, every "solution" to the Palestinian national question either perpetuates the oppression of the Palestinian Arab people or envisions a reversal of the terms of oppression, denying the legitimate national rights of the Hebrew-speaking people. In situations of interpenetrated peoples, a democratic solution to the national question can be achieved only through socialist revolution, because only the proletariat in power has an interest in resolving national antagonisms and can begin to meet the material needs of all working people.

We make a distinction between the Hebrew-speaking nation living in Israel and the Zionist state. This is counterposed to the view of the Zionists, and indeed of the Islamic fundamentalists, who equate the Zionist state with the Hebrew-speaking people. The Zionist state is not only a catastrophe for Palestinians—***it is also a deathtrap for Jews.*** Some 25 per cent of citizens live in poverty and income disparities are higher than in Egypt and Jordan. Sephardic Jews, though overwhelmingly under the sway of right-wing and religious parties, suffer widespread discrimination and poverty. The Palestinian Arabs, nominally "citizens" who constitute 20 per cent of Israel's population, are consigned to segregated, impoverished areas and low-paid, unskilled jobs.

Israeli society is not a seamless reactionary mass. Despite widespread support in Israel for the Gaza blockade, there have been demonstrations against the brutal killings on the flotilla, including a 6,000-strong rally in Tel Aviv on 5 June. It is the false consciousness of religion and Zionist nationalism and racism—in the face of pervasive anti-Semitism—that is the glue binding the Hebrew-speaking proletariat to its Israeli ruling-class enemy. As long as Zionist oppression of Palestinians continues, Israeli Jews will continue to be a target of hatred and outrage by the more than 100 million Arabs who surround them. It is only the working class of Israel—Hebrew and Arab—that has the capacity to destroy the Zionist citadel from within.

As Marxists, we fight to bring the class question to the fore. The only road to social and national liberation for the Palestinians—including the right of all refugees and their descendants to return to their homeland—and all the other peoples of the Near East lies through common class struggle by the Arab, Hebrew-speaking and other working classes of the region. For the Palestinians, this means recognising the right of the Hebrew-speaking people to national self-determination. In turn, breaking the Hebrew-speaking workers from their Zionist rulers requires that they champion the national rights of the Palestinians. We have no illusions that winning the Hebrew-speaking proletariat to this perspective will be an easy task. Indeed, it will likely require the victory of socialist revolution in one of the other Near Eastern states to break the Hebrew-speaking proletariat from Zionist chauvinism. This task is not made easier by the criminal indiscriminate terror bombings carried out by Islamic forces against Israeli civilians, which drive the Hebrew-speaking population further into the arms of the Zionist rulers.

At the same time, the solidarity of the Arab masses with the oppressed Palestinian people must be directed towards proletarian revolution against their own Arab rulers, who, whether bourgeois nationalists or Islamic traditionalists, are fundamentally the political agents of Western imperialism. If this does not happen, the intense and justifiable hostility against Israel and its American protector will serve to further strengthen the forces of Islamic fundamentalism, which posture as the "radical" opposition to the mainly pro-Western Arab regimes. We look to the proletariat of the region more widely, such as in Egypt, which has been a centre of working-class strikes and protests over the past several years. With some 50 per cent of the Palestinian population living outside the Occupied Territories—in Jordan, Lebanon, Israel—the national liberation of the Palestinians demands a perspective of socialist revolution throughout the Near East, including within Israel, the most powerful and economically advanced country in the region. It is vital to forge revolutionary Marxist parties throughout the Near East to unite the proletariat—Arab, Persian, Kurdish and Hebrew, Sunni and Shi'ite, Muslim and Christian—in struggle against imperialism and to smash the Zionist garrison state from within and sweep away the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Syrian Ba'athist bonapartists and the capitalist rulers of Lebanon through socialist revolution. ***For a socialist federation of the Near East!***

Our proletarian internationalist perspective is counterposed to those reformists who tail Islamic fundamentalism, such as the SWP. *Socialist Worker* (10 January 2009) ran an article titled "Hamas's History of Resistance," enthusing over Hamas as the "bearer of a tradition of Palestinian resistance." Islamic fundamentalists like Hamas and Islamic Jihad are vile anti-Jewish and anti-Christian religious bigots who seek to enslave women and extirpate any manifestations of social progress. Hamas is descended from the clerical-fascist Muslim Brotherhood, which became particularly prominent in Egypt in the late 1940s. Under the slogan "communism = atheism = liberation of women," the Muslim Brotherhood mobilised a terror campaign against Communists and other secular forces. Hamas preaches the social segregation of women, the wearing of the *hijab* (Islamic headscarf) and anti-woman *sharia* law. Far from embodying a "history of resistance," Hamas was initially supported by Israel as a counter-

Peters/NY Times

South African gold miners at union rally, 1983. Black workers' struggles against apartheid regime showed potential for proletarian revolution.

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ILWU Ship Boycott: Token of Solidarity with Palestinians

OAKLAND—Outraged by the Israeli army's May 31 massacre of nine volunteers aboard the *Mavi Marmara*, a Turkish ship carrying aid to besieged Palestinians in Gaza, some 800 protesters converged at the Stevedoring Services of America (SSA) terminal here in the early morning of June 20. The purpose of the protest was to boycott a container ship of the Israeli-owned Zim lines, the *Zim Shenzhen*. Longshoremen of International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 honored the picket line. In the end, the ship sat at berth for 12 hours before being unloaded.

Although the protest was largely symbolic, it was a genuine act of solidarity in defense of the Palestinians. In response, Israeli consular officials dispatched a delegation to a subsequent Local 10 exec board meeting to defend the attack on the "Freedom Flotilla." This effort was rightly shot down, and the executive board reaffirmed its opposition to the Israeli blockade of Gaza.

The impetus for the Oakland picket, called by the Labor/Community Committee in Solidarity with the People of Palestine, was an appeal by Palestinian unions for labor solidarity actions following the murderous attack on the *Mavi Marmara*. Swedish dock workers had called for a week-long labor boycott from June 23-29 of all trade with Israel. During that week, they refused to handle ten cargo containers being shipped to or from Israel. Longshoremen at the Port of Cochin, India, refused to work cargo from a Zim ship that had been unloaded in Sri Lanka and then shipped to Cochin in a feeder vessel. The Oakland port protest, which was endorsed by the Oakland Education Association and publicized by the San Francisco and Alameda Labor Councils, followed an ILWU Local 10 executive board resolution "condemning this Israeli attack" and calling for "unions to protest by any action they choose to take."

Supporters of the Spartacist League joined the Oakland picket as an expression of our commitment to the defense of the Palestinians against Zionist state terror, which is armed and bankrolled by U.S. imperialism. We are for time-delimited actions of labor solidarity like union boycotts called around concrete demands in defense of workers and the oppressed. We also support standing boycotts of military shipments to Israel, which would be a real blow against the Zionist butchers and, even more crucially, their bloody imperialist patrons. Our purpose in raising the call "Labor: Hot Cargo Military Goods to Israel!" as one of our signs expressed at the Oakland protest, is to strengthen the fighting power and class consciousness of the working class in solidarity with the exploited and oppressed of the world and in opposition to capitalist class rule here in the belly of the U.S. imperialist beast.

Bill Hackwell

WV Photo

Above: June 20 Oakland port picket against *Zim Shenzhen* ship, part of international labor boycott of Israeli shipping. Below: Ship being unloaded the next day, 12 hours after it arrived in Oakland.

In the context of worldwide protest against Israel's bloody assault on the flotilla of humanitarian aid to Gaza, a solid week-long, coastwide ILWU boycott of the Zim shipping conglomerate would have had tremendous impact. But this was not the purpose of the organizers of the Oakland protest, centrally the reformists of the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) and its ANSWER coalition and the Transport Workers Solidarity Committee (TWSC), mainly represented by ILWU Local 10 bureaucrats Jack Heyman and Clarence Thomas. Instead, they sought to give a labor veneer to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign, which appeals to the imperialists to act on behalf of the Palestinians through trade and other sanctions against Israel. As a July 9 LabourNet article by Greg Dropkin noted, Clarence Thomas "set out the current strategy" at the Oakland picket, arguing that "the thing that is going to make Israel and the United States both understand" that the blockade of Gaza can't continue "is the whole question of commerce and trade." Thomas went on to promote a three-pronged strategy of "Boycotts, Sanctions, and Divestment."

As opposed to time-delimited labor boycotts, open-ended boycotts of states like Israel are not only ineffective but also could prove harmful to the working class in the boycotted countries. As the article on the BDS campaign (see page 16) by our comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain explains, such appeals for open-ended boycotts promote suicidal illusions in the "democratic" pretensions of the imperialist rulers. If successful, the campaign would actually be a blow against the only force that can be mobilized to smash the Zionist state from within: the Hebrew-speaking and Arab workers of Israel.

The motions passed by the San Francisco and Alameda Labor Councils publicizing the Oakland protest supported the call by the United Nations and Amnesty International for an "investigation" of the massacre on the *Mavi Marmara*. This is in line with the entire BDS campaign, which invokes the UN as an ally against the Zionist rulers. Whatever criticisms of Israeli policy are occasionally expressed in UN resolutions, opponents of Zionist terror must place no reliance on this imperialist den of thieves and their victims. The UN time and again has acted to deepen the oppression of the Palestinians. It presided over the 1947 partition of Palestine, and it was UN "peacekeepers" who disarmed PLO fighters in Lebanon in 1982, setting up the massacre of Palestinians at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps by forces acting on behalf of the Israeli army.

The Ship That Hadn't Come In

The majority of the protesters who came out for the 5:30 a.m. picket thought that they were there to stop the Israeli ship from being worked. In fact, the *Zim Shenzhen* was scheduled to arrive at the Oakland port at 2 p.m. according to information readily available on the Zim Web site, which lists the schedule of its ships months in advance. When it became clear after a couple of hours that there was no Israeli ship at the terminal, a fact the organizers tried to dodge until it became obvious, disappointed protesters started to leave in increasing numbers. Organizers appealed for them to stay, aiming for a ruling by an arbitrator that the situation posed a "health and safety" threat to longshoremen, which, by the terms of the ILWU contract, would mean longshoremen could refuse to cross the picket line without penalty.

The union argued to the arbitrator that it would be a threat for Oakland cops to force an opening through the picket line, as demanded by employers. In April 2003, Oakland police assaulted longshoremen who honored a picket line set up to protest the Iraq war. The cops fired wooden bullets and other "non-lethal" projectiles at ILWU members and antiwar protesters, 41 of whom were injured, some seriously. Two dozen were arrested and then dragged through the courts on bogus charges that were eventually dropped. This time around, the arbitrator ruled that there was a "health and safety" issue, and longshoremen left with the promise of partial pay for the day. The picket line then quickly dispersed, with the organizers urging protesters to return at 4:30 p.m. for the afternoon dispatch.

continued on page 15

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weight to the secular-nationalist PLO. Carrying out attacks on secularists and Communists, the Islamists engaged in neither political nor military struggle against Israel.

With the beginning of the first *Intifada* in 1987, the Islamists feared that if they stood aside they would lose their following. Hamas was founded in the spring of 1988 as an Islamist political movement with an armed wing. Hamas sought to fuse the national struggle, previously a secular movement containing a leftist component, with reactionary Islamic fundamentalism. It was only in the autumn of 1989, after discovering that Hamas had killed two Israeli soldiers, that Israel broke relations with the group.

The Arab bourgeois regimes have always been enemies of Palestinian national liberation. When the Arab armies went to war with Israel in 1948, it was not to "liberate" Palestine but to carve it up among themselves. Between 1948 and the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the West Bank and Gaza were occupied by Jordan and Egypt respectively. And the Palestinians there remained politically dispossessed and subject to brutal repression. In the decade following the 1967 war, nearly *50,000* Palestinians were slaughtered by Arab governments, including some 10,000 militants killed by the Jordanian monarchy in the 1970 Black September massacre.

The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, which laid the basis for the liberation of the tsarist empire's many subjugated peoples, was a beacon of liberation for the oppressed throughout the world, inspiring anti-colonial revolts throughout the Near East. This legacy continued despite the Stalinist degeneration of the USSR. In 1958, Iraqi workers led by the multinational Iraqi Communist Party—which included Muslims, Jews and Christians, Arabs and Kurds—fought to make a revolution and came to the brink of power. However, this and other revolutionary opportunities were betrayed by the Kremlin and the Stalinist-led Communist parties, subordinating the proletariat to an alliance with "progressive" bourgeois nationalists, who, once in power, launched a blood-bath against the Communist-led workers.

What is necessary is the forging of revolutionary Marxist parties throughout the Near East, built in opposition to all forms of nationalism and religious fundamentalism, and committed to the struggle for socialist revolution, which, on an international scale, can finally open the door to human equality and liberation. The conquest of power by the proletariat in the Near East does not complete the socialist revolution, but only opens it by changing the direction of social development. But that social development can be consolidated only through the international extension of the revolution, particularly to the advanced, industrialised imperialist countries.

Defence of those subjugated by the imperialists around the globe demands the pursuit of class struggle in Britain, the U.S. and other imperialist centres, pointing towards a proletarian struggle for power. The Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League, is committed to the fight to forge a multiethnic revolutionary workers party to lead the proletariat in the struggle to sweep away British imperialism through socialist revolution.■

Liberals Push Regulation Hoax

Economic Crisis and the Capitalist State

Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Graph

AP

Long-term unemployment in U.S. has skyrocketed in current recession. Right: Crowd lines up to enter Chicago job fair in February.

Part One of this article, which we conclude below, appeared in WV *No. 961 (2 July).*

PART TWO

President Barack Obama hailed the financial regulation bill passed by Congress last month as promising "greater economic security to families" by ensuring a "safer financial system" that is "far less prone to panic and collapse." Talk of "economic security" rings pretty hollow when some 26 million people in this country are out of work or forced to accept part-time work, and the number of long-term unemployed is at a record level. The White House has also been loudly trumpeting the "success" of the multibillion-dollar government bailouts of GM and Chrysler. These deals were certainly successful for the auto bosses: the pro-capitalist leadership of the United Auto Workers capitulated to the bailout's condition that new workers get only half the wages made by the existing workforce. This measure massively increases the rate of exploitation of auto workers and strikes a direct blow at what was once the country's most powerful industrial union. Meanwhile, budget-slashing state and local governments have eliminated 102,000 jobs in the last three months.

Working people are being made to pay for the economic crisis that was triggered by wanton capitalist speculation. Nearly 528,000 homes were seized by banks and other lenders in the first six months of this year, a rate that is on track to eclipse the 900,000 homes repossessed last year. A report by the Department of Agriculture last fall stated that almost 25 percent of children in the U.S. suffer from "food insecurity"—they either go hungry or eat unhealthy food because that is all their families can afford.

The banking "reform" increases the number of financial regulatory agencies and widens their jurisdiction. But neither this law nor the measures being implemented by European capitalist governments will head off future financial crises. Recurrent economic crises are a consequence of the fundamental workings of the capitalist system of production for profit, not accidental occurrences caused by insufficient regulation. What happened on Wall Street in the fall of 2008 was substantially similar in its basic dynamic to what happened in the London stock exchange in 1720 when a speculative bubble involving shares of the South Seas Company burst, touching off an enormous banking crisis.

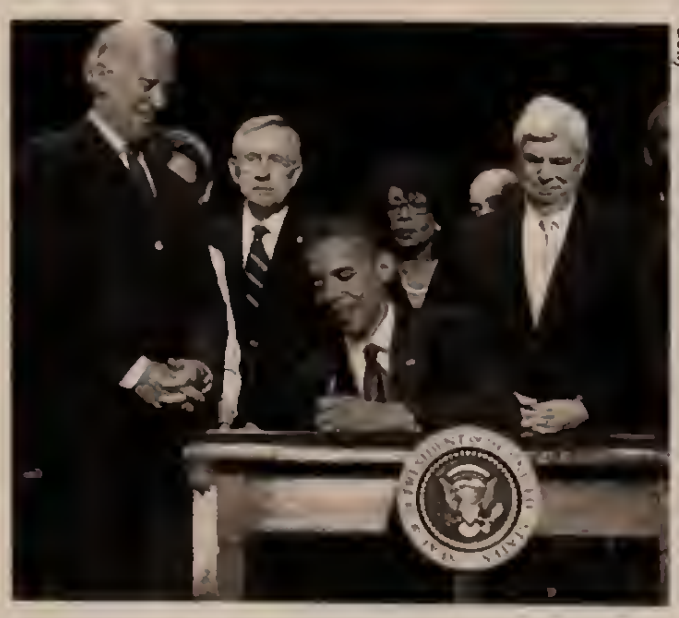
Wall Street is hardly crying over the "reform." The law does not even set a minimum requirement of how much capital banks must hold compared to how much they lend out—the so-called "leverage ratio." The firms whose collapse triggered the financial crisis were in some cases leveraged up to 40-to-1—about eight times the corresponding ratio for most hedge funds, which are notorious for engaging in speculation. The new law will likely require that currency and interest-rate swaps be bought and sold on public exchanges, supposedly to introduce more market stability. But trading of more exotic and risky derivatives, like the credit-default swaps that played a major role in the economic crisis, will largely remain in the shadows.

The push to pass legislation increasing regulation of the financial industry goes back to last December, when popular anger exploded over reports that Wall Street executives had allotted themselves some $30 billion in year-end bonuses. Lashing out at "fat cat bankers," Obama embraced the regulatory proposals of former Federal Reserve chairman Paul Volcker, who has campaigned against increased financial concentration and risk-taking by the biggest banks. While Volcker is today widely hailed by Democrats, he gained his political authority in the Republican Reagan administration in the early 1980s, when he slashed runaway inflation by tightening the money supply, deliberately provoking a sharp economic downturn.

What Obama called the "Volcker rule" would prohibit commercial banks from owning hedge funds and from engaging in "proprietary trading"—that is, trading on financial markets with the banks' own money as opposed to seeking commissions from trades. But the law's formal restrictions on proprietary trading will have little concrete impact given the difficulty of singling out such trades. Goldman Sachs recently reported an almost $2 billion quarterly loss by its equity trading desk. How would regulators decide if those stock market bets should be considered speculation with Goldman's own funds or a response to customer demand?

Financiers will always find ways to circumvent limits on speculation. To get around restrictions on owning hedge funds, former investment banks such as Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley could simply give up their federal bank charters, which they acquired in late 2008 in order to qualify for low-interest loans from the Federal Reserve.

Violent and acute crises, often triggered by financial panics and followed by prolonged depressions, have been endemic to the capitalist system from its very beginning. In the *Communist Manifesto* (1848),



Getty

July 21: Obama signs financial "reform" bill. "We can live with this," declared one Wall Street banker when law's details were revealed.

Break with the Democrats!
For a Workers Party That Fights for a Workers Government!

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels pointed to "the commercial crises that by their periodic return put the existence of the entire bourgeois society on trial, each time more threateningly." The current crisis—the deepest since the Great Depression of the 1930s—was in good part prepared by the bursting of the bubble of investment in computer and telecommunications stocks less than a decade ago, which touched off a recession. Following that collapse, speculative investment increasingly shifted to the housing market, fueling that bubble. (For a development of the Marxist understanding of capitalist economic crises, see the 2009 Spartacist pamphlet, *Karl Marx Was Right—Capitalist Anarchy and the Immiseration of the Working Class*.)

The bursting of the dot-com and housing bubbles and the crises they generated were direct products of the capitalist system of production for profit. Capitalists invest in expanding productive capacity on the assumption that the additional output—autos, houses, Internet services, etc.—can be sold at the existing rate of profit, at least. However, during periods of expansion the average rate of profit tends to fall. Even if productivity rises and wages do not, increased profit per worker does not offset increased capital per worker. This situation eventually creates a crisis of *overproduction*, as capitalists produce more goods and services than can be sold at a satisfactory rate of profit. Marx explained in *Capital* (Volume III):

> "There are not too many necessities of life produced, in proportion to the existing population. Quite the reverse. Too little is produced to decently and humanely satisfy the wants of the great mass....
>
> "Too many means of labour and necessities of life are produced at times to permit of their serving as means for the exploitation of labourers at a certain rate of profit."

Marx and Engels explained that the only way to end the boom-bust cycles inherent to capitalism is for the working class to take control of the means of production through socialist revolution and institute a planned, collectivized economy.

The Threatening Debt Crisis

Last year, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimated that the combined cost of bailing out the world financial system had reached almost $12 trillion, equivalent to about one-fifth of the annual economic output of the entire planet. As a result of governments around the world injecting capital into banks, soaking up bad investments and guaranteeing problem loans, there has been a massive transfer of debt from the private to the public sector. The IMF recently projected that within four years the amount of government debt in the advanced capitalist countries will reach 110 percent of their collective GDP. This has nervous investors pondering which governments may prove unable to bear the burden.

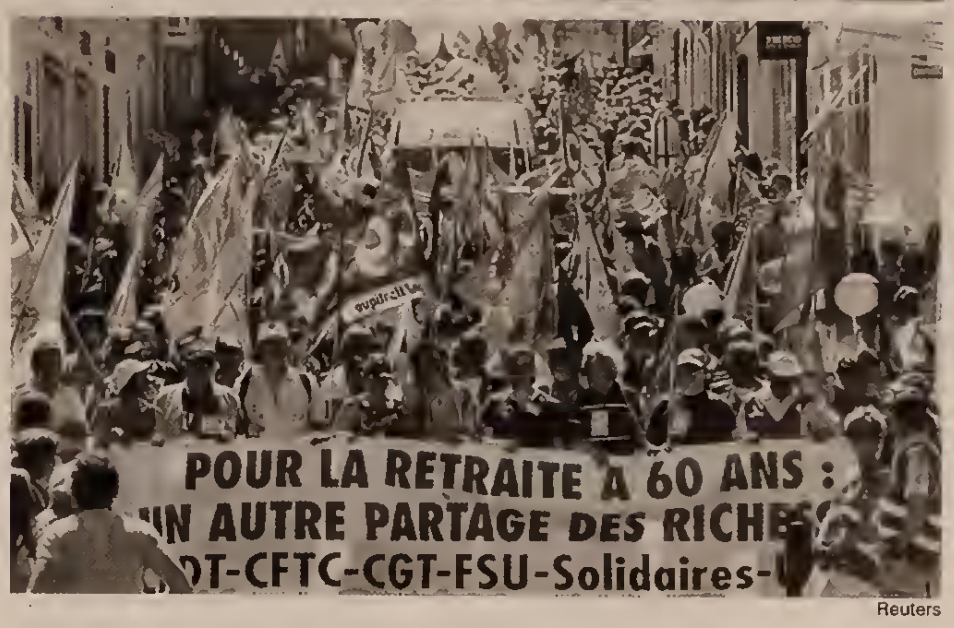
For now, the U.S. Treasury continues to find takers for government securities at historically low interest rates. But this cannot last indefinitely. Early last year, we wrote in "Obama: CEO of Bankrupt American Capitalism" (*WV* No. 930, 13 February 2009):

> "How much more can the U.S. government borrow before its creditors conclude that Washington is so overburdened with debt that it is no longer a reliable client? Most Keynesian economists—and the Obama administration—apparently think the answer to that question is: More, much more. They point to the fact that U.S. Treasuries continue to be seen as a 'risk-free' investment, allowing the U.S. government to borrow at almost zero interest....
>
> "More fundamentally, the dollar continues to be the major reserve currency throughout the capitalist world and also for China. Foreign capitalist powers and the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy are inhibited from a major sell-off of dollars because this would lead to a rapid devaluation of their own financial reserves. Nonetheless, what was an unstable situation before the current crisis has become much more so."

A prominent Keynesian standard-bearer is liberal economist Paul Krugman, who has campaigned for greatly increased deficit spending, arguing that any adverse consequences are necessarily far in the future. In his 5 February *New York Times* column, Krugman wrote: "The long-run budget outlook is problematic, but short-term deficits aren't—and even the long-term outlook is much less frightening than the public is being led to believe.... If anything, deficits should be bigger than they are because the government should be doing more than it is to create jobs."

Echoing Krugman's call for government intervention to save capitalism from itself is the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO). As Congress was preparing to pass Obama's "stimulus" package shortly after his inauguration, the

AP



Reuters

German chancellor Angela Merkel and British prime minister David Cameron at G20 summit in Toronto, June 27. Below: French workers rally in Nantes as part of nationwide protest against government attack on pensions, June 24.

ISO's *Socialist Worker* (24 February 2009) editorialized that Obama was "absolutely correct to say, as Congress considered the legislation: 'At this particular moment, with the private sector so weakened by this recession, the federal government is the only entity left with the resources to jolt our economy back into life. It is only government that can break the vicious cycle where lost jobs lead to people spending less money, which leads to even more layoffs.' But to have that effect, government spending will have to be much greater."

The liberal Krugman and the social democrats of the ISO treat deficit spending as if it is a costless way to finance social programs beneficial to working people, a kind of free lunch. However, the owners of money capital do not purchase U.S. Treasury bonds out of largesse but in order to increase their wealth through a future stream of interest payments. The larger the government debt relative to total output, the larger the share of total income that goes to the propertied class in the form of interest, a kind of welfare for the rich. A study by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) indicated:

> "With such a large increase in debt, plus an expected increase in interest rates as the economic recovery strengthens, interest payments on the debt are poised to skyrocket. CBO projects that the government's annual spending on net interest will more than triple between 2010 and 2020 in nominal terms, from $207 billion to $723 billion, and will more than double as a share of GDP, from 1.4 percent to 3.2 percent."
>
> —*The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2010 to 2020* (January 2010)

While some sections of the ruling class push deficit spending, others worry that increased government debt will cause a sharp rise in inflation and thus erode the real market value of their bond holdings as well as the interest they derive from them.

Krugman concedes that U.S. debt levels are high and rising but, citing Greece's public debt of 113 percent of GDP, argues that "other countries have dealt with similar levels of debt without crisis" (*New York Times*, 9 April). Just one month after that was written, Greece's debt woes came within a hair's breadth of triggering a Europe-wide financial meltdown.

The instability of the capitalist financial system is such that much lower debt levels than Greece's today have often sufficed to set off catastrophic debt crises. A recent book by former IMF economists Carmen Reinhart and Kenneth Rogoff, *This Time Is Different: Eight Centuries of Financial Folly* (2009), shows that of the more than 30 sovereign defaults by "middle-income" countries between 1970 and 2008, more than half occurred at debt levels of less than 60 percent of GDP.

Myths of Financial Regulation

Liberal economist John Kenneth Galbraith, in his classic history of the stock market crash of 1929, bemoaned what he saw as Wall Street's irrational refusal to rein in speculative financial booms before they went bust, going so far as to declare: "Here, at least equally with communism, lies the threat to capitalism" (*The Great Crash, 1929* [1997]). Galbraith's history shows that government regulators in the lead-up to the crash did not even try to dampen the speculative frenzy. As long as the bubble continued, it was fabulously profitable for the capitalists. And besides, who would want to take the blame for touching off a collapse?

Under the impact of the Great Depression, Congress passed a precursor of the "Volcker rule," the 1933 Glass-Steagall Act, which prohibited commercial banks from trading in stocks and bonds. An enduring myth is that Glass-Steagall provided a backstop against financial crises and that its 1999 repeal under the Clinton administration is to blame for the current recession. Glass-Steagall's formal prohibition on securities dealings did not prevent banks from starting in the mid 1980s to "securitize" their loans (pooling them and issuing securities based on the pool). This was a way for the banks to get the loans off their balance sheets and thus circumvent capital reserve requirements, freeing them to make new loans. Alan Greenspan, who as Fed chairman from 1987 to 2006 was Washington's regulator-in-chief, hailed such "innovation" for supposedly reducing financial instability by spreading risk among many investors.

In the years preceding the current crisis, debt-securitization markets were the source of 60 percent of all credit in the U.S. After investors lost huge sums on pools of subprime mortgages, entire swaths of the so-called "shadow banking system" collapsed. Now the Fed is virtually the only buyer of mortgage-backed securities—the sector of the securitization market that in the U.S. dwarfs all others—with holdings totaling over $1.1 trillion.

Krugman has been a persistent champion of extending federal supervision to the "shadow banking system"—hedge funds, private equity funds and the like. Yet in the lead-up to the current crisis, federal regulators were *complicit* in using this very system to *conceal* bankers' speculative risk-taking. As Lehman Brothers hurtled toward collapse in September 2008, regulators from both the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and the Securities and Exchange Commission turned a blind eye as executives window-dressed their accounts to hide their dangerously high level of debt. The New York Fed under Timothy Geithner, now Obama's Treasury secretary, further helped Lehman artificially bolster its balance sheet by temporarily holding billions of dollars in "toxic" assets.

Krugman's answer to such behavior was that Congress needed to enact "rules that would force action even by regulators who don't especially want to do their jobs" (*New York Times*, 5 April). The liberal Krugman sees the government as an impartial arbiter, ultimately serving the common good (with the possible exception of some recalcitrant regulators, who need to be read the riot act). In contrast, Marxists understand that the capitalist government serves as the executive committee of the bourgeoisie as a whole, defending its class rule by employing the armed might of the state—police, army, courts and prisons—against the workers and the oppressed.

A key element in ensuring the stability of the capitalist order is the belief by the working class that the system's most clearly destructive features such as mass unemployment can be eliminated through reforms. In the absence of a mass reformist workers party in this country, the Democratic Party is offered as the vehicle through which the capitalist state can be pressured to serve the interests of the working class and oppressed.

This false consciousness is promoted not only by the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy but also by the reformist left. Virtually every liberal and reformist organization openly or tacitly supported Obama's election as a harbinger of "change." Now, after the bailout of the banks and auto companies, the escalation of the murderous occupation of Afghanistan, the stepping up of repression as part of the "war on terror," Obama's "leftist" cheerleaders appear to be curbing their enthusiasm. A 27 January *Socialist Worker* editorial lamented:

> "Obama had the opportunity to change the direction of U.S. politics and society—and the popularity to accomplish it. Even those on the left, like us at *Socialist Worker*, who were skeptical of Obama's promises concluded that the multiple crises facing the White House would compel the president to move away from the free-market, neoliberal policies that characterized not only Bush, but the Clinton administration before him....
>
> "On the contrary, instead of using economic policies to counteract the worst mass unemployment since the 1930s, Obama rushed to aid the banks."

Nothing other was to be expected from Obama and his claque of Wall Street advisers and operatives. But for the ISO, Obama turned out to be a "disappointment" because "the biggest forces in the Democratic Party's base have completely failed to hold Obama's feet to the fire." In other words, the trade-union tops and other big players in the Democratic Party failed to exert sufficient pressure. The ISO sees its task, as always, as building a "grassroots" movement to pressure Washington, this time based on "the growing anger with the Obama administration among precisely those who supported it most enthusiastically."

The shell game through which the Democrats are sold as the "friend" of labor and blacks has been central to preserving the rule of racist American capitalism. Breaking the allegiance of labor, blacks and the oppressed to the Democratic Party is key to transforming the working class from a class *in* itself—the object of capitalist exploitation—to a class *for* itself—conscious of its revolutionary purpose as

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Economy...

(continued from page 13)

the agency for the eradication of the capitalist order. This task is integral to building a workers party that will lead all the exploited and the oppressed in the fight for a workers government.

China's Growth Amid World Recession

At home with American bourgeois liberals, the ISO denounces the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state (as well as those of North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam) as a "state capitalist" society. This is but a "theoretical" cover for the ISO's treacherous support to capitalist counterrevolutionary forces parading under the banners of bourgeois "democracy" and "human rights."

Despite the inroads of "market reforms," the core of China's industrial economy—steel and non-ferrous metals, heavy electrical equipment, telecommunications, oil extraction and refining—continues to be based on state-owned enterprises. Outside of the foreign-owned sector, almost all productive investment is channeled through predominantly state-owned banks.

The *non*-capitalist character of China's economy has been clearly demonstrated by the striking effectiveness of the government's almost $600 billion stimulus program—mainly investment in infrastructure and expanding bank lending—introduced in the fall of 2008 as the First World capitalist economies were plunging downward. The sudden collapse of its export markets in North America and West Europe was a heavy blow to China's economy, whose rate of growth fell from 13 percent in 2007 to under 7 percent in the last quarter of 2008. Since then, however, economic growth has accelerated, reaching almost 12 percent in the first quarter of this year before slacking off somewhat in the second quarter.

As Part One of this article stated, we stand for the unconditional military defense of China against imperialism and internal capitalist counterrevolutionary forces. At the same time, we fight for proletarian political revolution to oust the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy and place power in the hands of workers and peasants councils committed to the struggle for a world socialist order. If the proletariat of the capitalist world is to advance its struggles against the rapacious exploiters, it must embrace the fight to defend the remaining deformed workers states, and the social gains embodied in them, against the common class enemy.

Bloomberg

High-speed railway under construction near Shanghai. Collectivized core of Chinese economy laid basis for massive infrastructure development program introduced in late 2008.

Spartakist photos

Left: German Trotskyists raise call "For a Socialist United States of Europe!" at 1982 demonstration in Bonn. Right: At February 2008 Berlin protest against Turkish attack on Iraqi Kurds, placard at left reads: "Down With Racist Fortress Europe! Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!"

Europe in the Global Capitalist Crisis

Like the financial crisis that was sparked by the unraveling of the U.S. subprime mortgage sector, the crisis that shook the European Union (EU) this spring originated in a relatively tiny segment of the global economy: Greece. In both cases, the effect of the financial collapse at the origin of the crisis was magnified many times over by the unbridled extension of bad loans and speculative investments.

Though Greece represents a mere 2 percent of European gross domestic product (GDP), fear that its government might default on its debt generated global shock waves because it raised the prospect of default by economically stronger EU countries, such as Spain. Some $2.6 trillion of public and private debt from Greece, Spain and Portugal is held by financial institutions outside those countries, with French and German banks particularly exposed. Accounting for two-thirds of that debt, Spain has been mired in recession, with an unemployment rate of 20 percent, one of the highest in the EU. The EU's current travails were foreshadowed by crises that broke out in Central and East Europe last year, when Hungary, Ukraine, Latvia, Serbia, Belarus and Romania all needed bailouts from the IMF and EU to avert defaults.

Big-time investors and government officials fear that as the debt of countries along Europe's southern tier loses value, which could happen suddenly and massively in the event of a default on government bonds, banks across Europe could be saddled with crippling losses. Such fears came to a head in early May as the value of sovereign bonds of the most vulnerable European countries plunged. As happened in the U.S. following the collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008, short-term credit markets began to freeze up. The German government, having for months rejected pressures from France and other European countries to agree to a bailout plan, suddenly relented. On May 10, after working frantically into the early morning hours to hammer out an agreement before the financial markets opened, officials announced an almost $1 trillion loan package by the EU and IMF to help the Greek and other troubled EU governments avoid default.

At bottom, the EU rescue package is—no less than Washington's bank bailout—a case of bourgeois governments using taxpayers' money to line the pockets of financial capitalists. As part of the rescue plan, the European Central Bank (ECB) committed to buying Greek bonds held by European banks; to date, the ECB has moved almost $80 billion worth of shaky sovereign debt off the banks' balance sheets and onto its own. Karl Otto Pöhl, former head of the German central bank, let the cat out of the bag when he declared that the bailout "was about protecting German banks, but especially the French banks, from debt write offs" (*Spiegel* online, 18 May).

With the ECB/IMF rescue plan, the European bourgeoisies are buying time, but at the expense of deepening contradictions that are inherent in the capitalist system. Across Europe, governments are seeking to head off debt crises through savage austerity measures, such as cutting the pay of public sector workers, reducing pensions and raising taxes. In Britain, Conservative prime minister David Cameron has launched an austerity drive that, if implemented, would slash some *600,000* public sector jobs.

These attacks have not gone unanswered by the working class, as we pointed out in Part One of this article. Following a spate of massive strikes that caused one-day shutdowns in a number of European countries, a "European day of action" has been called for September 29, including a one-day general strike in Spain. Nevertheless, Europe's capitalist rulers show no signs of relenting. Yet slashing state expenditure and private consumption in countries already reeling from an economic slowdown risks provoking sharp recession. This would further undermine the ability of those countries to pay off their debts, ultimately *increasing* the threat of a full-blown financial crisis.

The EU and Deepening Interimperialist Rivalries

The debt crisis in Europe points up the contradiction that has existed since the 1979 creation of the European Monetary System, which required that member countries keep their currency exchange rates within a narrow band relative to other European currencies. That system included countries that were historically inflation-prone and whose currencies had persistently depreciated, such as Greece, as well as others—above all, Germany—that had strong, persistently appreciating currencies.

The establishment of the European Monetary Union (EMU) in 1999 created a single currency, the euro, for most of western and southern Europe (Britain being the main exception). In this set-up, one monetary policy was deemed applicable to all, with control of the Eurozone's money supply in the hands of the ECB. If Greece were still using the drachma, its old national currency, it would likely try to get out from under its debt load by pursuing inflationary measures combined with currency devaluation, reducing the world market price of its exports and providing a boost to its main industry, tourism. Instead, the Greek bourgeoisie is seeking to pay off the country's entire debt by extracting real wealth from the working class and other toilers.

The euro crisis is an expression of the fact that, beginning in the late 19th century, the productive forces of capitalism outgrew the limits of the bourgeois nation-state. This is a fundamental feature of imperialism, the most advanced stage of capitalist development, in which a handful of advanced countries compete globally for control of markets, raw materials and access to cheap labor. As Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained in his classic 1916 work, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, imperialism is characterized by the growth of monopolies and the consolidation of giant financial institutions "having at their command almost the whole of the money capital of all the capitalists and small businessmen and also the larger part of the means of production and sources of raw materials."

Sharp tensions among the imperialist powers emerged at the June G20 summit meeting in Toronto ostensibly over how to address the economic crisis, but at bottom reflecting deeper conflicts. German chancellor Angela Merkel roundly rebuffed Obama's call, supported by French president Nicolas Sarkozy, that Germany come to the aid of manufacturers internationally by increasing government spending, stimulating private consumption and relying less on exports. Merkel countered that she had no intention of "artificially reducing Germany's competitiveness," while her finance minister took aim at (unnamed) countries that had "become addicted to borrowing."

Obama promised in his January State of the Union address to create two million jobs in the U.S. by doubling exports over the next five years. In a world economy that is stagnant at best, a significant increase in exports can be achieved only at the expense of the American bourgeoisie's competitors. While the U.S. ran a trade deficit of almost $375 billion last year, the German export powerhouse had a $185 billion surplus. What made the German bourgeoisie the number one capitalist exporter was its success in driving down workers' wages. Unit labor costs in Germany fell an average of 1.4 percent per year between 2000 and 2008, twice the rate of decline in the U.S. That enormous increase in the rate of exploitation was the fruit of measures pushed through, with the active support of the trade-union bureaucracy, by the Social Democratic Party/Green coalition that governed Germany from 1998 to 2005 (see "Financial Crisis Rocks Imperialist EU," *WV* No. 960, 4 June).

The European Union is in its central axis a bloc between the German and French ruling classes to pursue their economic interests vis-à-vis their powerful American imperialist rival on the one side and the smaller and weaker European states on the other. The ruling classes of the economically weaker players that joined the European Monetary Union committed to accepting the discipline laid out in the 1992 Treaty of Maastricht (e.g., limits on budget deficits) because they benefited from the cheaper loans, larger inflows of capital and freer trade within Europe that the euro brought with it. But, as the current economic crisis has revealed, while EU/EMU member states are nominally partners, they are also, like all capitalist countries, in competition with each other. Today, the rulers of countries like Greece, Spain and Portugal discover that, if they are to close their gaping balance of payments deficits, they must compete head-to-head with the German export juggernaut. Fat chance!

Paul Krugman thinks he has a solution, one that is also embraced by a number of European social democrats. According to Krugman, "to make the euro work, Europe needs to move much further toward political union, so that European nations start to function more like American states" (*New York Times*, 15 February). We long ago debunked the illusion that the EU could lay the basis for a capitalist United States of Europe, writing in a statement by the International Communist League:

> "Since capitalism is organised on the basis of particular national states, itself the cause of repeated imperialist wars to redivide the world, it is impossible to cohere a stable pan-European bourgeois state. A European imperialist 'superstate' can only be achieved by the methods of

ILWU...

(continued from page 11)

Spartacist League supporters also participated in the much smaller afternoon picket line. SSA had cancelled its order for an evening crew to work the Zim ship. But when the ship finally arrived after 5:30 p.m., a protest organizer announced that it was being tied up to the docks. Someone yelled out to ask who was doing the work. The question was ignored, and no wonder, since it was *ILWU linesmen* who were working behind the picket line. The ship was unloaded the following morning by an ILWU crew.

We do not fault the longshoremen who tied up the ship. For all the hoopla, the fact of the matter is that little to no effort was made to mobilize ILWU members for what some on the left are trumpeting as a "historic" labor action. Most ILWU members were not even aware that this protest was taking place. Those ILWUers who refused to cross the morning picket line had not been dispatched to work the Zim ship for the simple reason that it hadn't even arrived. Confronted with the picket, these workers were either sold illusions in their class enemy by the promoters of the "boycott, sanctions and divestment" movement or just walked away with the promise of some of their wages. As a former ILWU Local 6 member argued on the Advance the Struggle Web site:

> "The claim that the rank-and-file stopped an Israeli ship in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle is misleading. Pro-Palestinian activists set up a picket line with the intent of invoking an arbitrator to send the longshore workers home for 'health and safety' reasons according to their contract. Which worked, but NOT based on any agency on the part of the workers."

WV Photo

Spartacists at June 20 Oakland picket.

For International Labor Solidarity!

Many speakers at the June 20 picket invoked a 1984 action by ILWU Local 10 members who refused to unload South African cargo aboard the *Nedlloyd Kimberley* in solidarity with the fight of the black population of South Africa against the apartheid regime. We saluted the longshoremen who stood firm for ten days despite the refusal of the ILWU tops to give the action official union backing, leaving the longshoremen to go it alone. At the time, *Workers Vanguard* supported Local 10 executive board member Stan Gow, who fought for a solid union picket line to stop all work on the South Africa-bound *Kimberley* and to shut down the port against any retaliation by the shipping bosses. Helping the ILWU tops head off any such action were a couple of left-talking operators on the Local 10 executive board, including Howard Keylor, a supporter of the misnamed "Bolshevik Tendency." At the June 20 protest, Keylor promoted himself as the author of the 1984 action. (For an honest and synthetic account of this action, see "The Truth About the 1984 *Nedlloyd Kimberley* Boycott," *WV* No. 873, 7 July 2006.)

The ILWU Local 10 bureaucracy has a long history of spouting fine words of "solidarity" that cover for inaction or betrayal of the class interests of the workers in practice. Heyman and Thomas, who have long been fixtures in the bureaucracy, merely give this game a "militant" veneer in their role as the labor face of the Bay Area radical-liberal milieu. At a June 5 Bay Area protest against the Israeli assault on the *Mavi Marmara*, Heyman argued that "pressuring the Obama administration for justice is illusory" and counterposed mobilizing workers power to appeals for "consumer boycotts." But it was precisely appeals to the imperialists to rein in their Zionist allies that were behind the June 20 protest picket, of which Heyman was a central organizer. Rather than advancing class-struggle action by longhshore and other workers in defense of the Palestinians, these politics contributed to the token nature of the Oakland port protest.

International labor solidarity is key to defending the struggles of the working masses and oppressed peoples of the world against their brutal subjugation by the imperialists and their local henchmen. Not only would such solidarity by U.S. trade unionists strengthen the power of the workers overseas in the fight for the socialist overthrow of their capitalist rulers, but also it would advance the class struggle in this country against the main enemy, U.S. imperialism. This perspective means fighting for a new leadership of the unions—one rooted in a program of proletarian internationalist struggle, not pandering to the class enemy—as part of the struggle to build a multiracial revolutionary workers party. Only such a party can lead the struggle for the socialist liberation of humanity.■

> Adolf Hitler, not those of Jacques Delors, the French social-democratic architect of Maastricht."
>
> —"For a Workers Europe—For Socialist Revolution!" *WV* No. 670, 13 June 1997

As Marxists, we oppose the European Union, an imperialist trade bloc and a vehicle for European capitalist classes to cooperate against the working class and oppressed minorities of each country. Our opposition is based on proletarian internationalism and is counterposed to the nationalist protectionism pushed by the reformist leaders of the working class. As our 1997 statement declared:

> "In the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848, Marx and Engels noted that the capitalist system had created a world market, laying the basis for proletarian internationalism. Only the taking of state power by the working class, and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in at least several advanced industrial countries, can achieve a rationally planned economy, placing the productive capacity of Europe at the service of the working people of the world. Only on this basis can we speak of a ***Socialist*** United States of Europe."

Expropriate the Expropriators!

Massive government intervention into the economy has done nothing to resolve the underlying debt crisis, which threatens to erupt anew in myriad ways. Banks have still not accounted for a lot of bad debt, including from those mortgage-backed securities that have not been taken over by the government. A number of "zombie" banks are technically insolvent but have been kept alive by government support. Now banks face a further tidal wave of losses as new categories of bad debt come to the fore—such as commercial real estate loans, to which regional banks are particularly exposed. And such losses could well be dwarfed by the chain reaction set off by a default (even if partial) by Greece or other debt-ridden countries.

Last year Krugman proposed that a way to reinforce the financial system was to "temporarily nationalize the most troubled banks" in order to give them "a large injection of capital from taxpayers" before returning them to private ownership (*New York Times*, 19 October 2009). The ISO also called to nationalize the banks, proclaiming, moreover, that this would be "an important step on the road to socialism." The ISO's Fred Moseley wrote in *International Socialist Review* (March-April 2009):

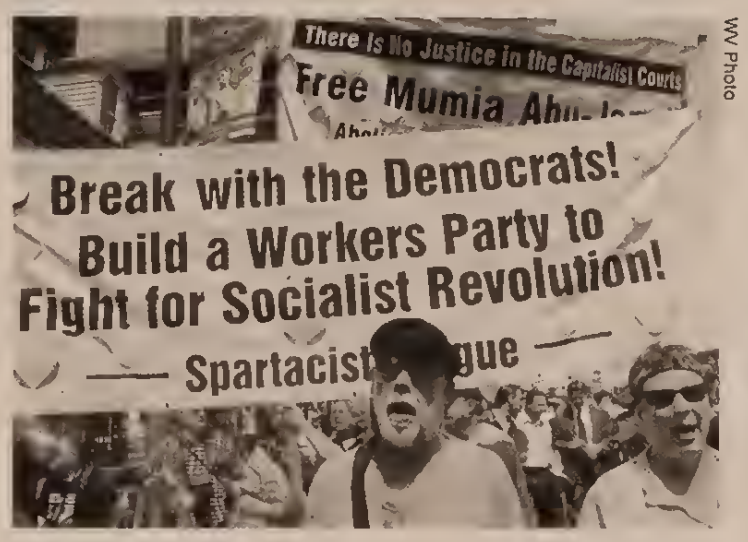
> "When a financial crisis threatens, or begins, there seem to be only two options: bail out the financial capitalists in some way or suffer a more severe financial crisis....
>
> "The only way to avoid this cruel dilemma is to make the economy less dependent on financial capitalists. And the only way to accomplish this greater independence from financial capitalists is for the government itself to become the main provider of credit in the economy, especially for home mortgages, and perhaps also for consumer loans, and maybe even eventually for business loans. In other words, finance should be nationalized and operated by the government in the interest of public policy objectives."

Make the economy less dependent on financial capitalists by turning the banks over to the likes of Timothy Geithner? In Italy, the fact that the bulk of the banking system was nationalized in the 1930s and remained largely government-owned until well into the 1990s did nothing to prevent extravagant risk-taking by financial capitalists. In the early '90s, a severe financial crisis caused by a wave of bad loans brought down dozens of Italian banks, which together accounted for fully 11 percent of the country's lending.

The ISO's schema closely parallels that put forward by French Socialists under François Mitterrand, who came to power in 1981 in a popular-front coalition with the Communist Party and the bourgeois Left Radicals. Promising a "great peaceful revolution," in 1982 the Mitterrand government took over 100 percent of the capital of all the large private banks—a total of 36—as well as of a number of industrial groups, giving the government direct control over about 50 percent of the country's industrial investment and virtually all credit. Within a year, as France struggled through the global economic downturn, the Mitterrand government launched an austerity program including a wage freeze, cuts in social programs and mass layoffs. An academic history of those years concluded: "Nationalisation enabled French industry to modernize and restructure in a blunt, indeed brutal manner. The success of the 1982 nationalisation programme was confirmed by the popularity of these firms when privatised by the 1986-88 government of Jacques Chirac," the right-wing premier at the time (Alistair Cole, *François Mitterrand: A Study in Political Leadership* [1994]).

In the 1938 Transitional Program, the founding document of the Fourth International, written in the midst of the Great Depression, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky wrote: "Only the expropriation of the private banks and the concentration of the entire credit system in the hands of the state will provide the latter with the necessary actual, i.e., material resources—and not merely paper and bureaucratic resources—for economic planning." Trotsky insisted that "***the state-ization of the banks*** will produce these favorable results only if the state power itself passes completely from the hands of the exploiters into the hands of the toilers."

Achieving that task—the conquest of state power by the proletariat—requires a social revolution. The necessary instrument to lead such a struggle to victory is a vanguard party of the proletariat modeled on the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky. Through intervening into class and social struggle and fighting for the Marxist worldview, the International Communist League seeks to provide that instrument through the reforging of the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution.■



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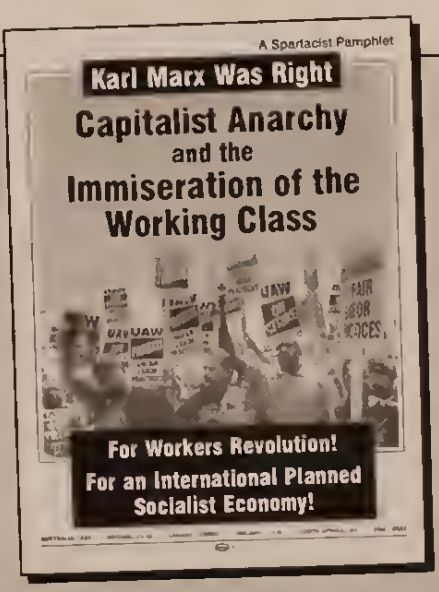
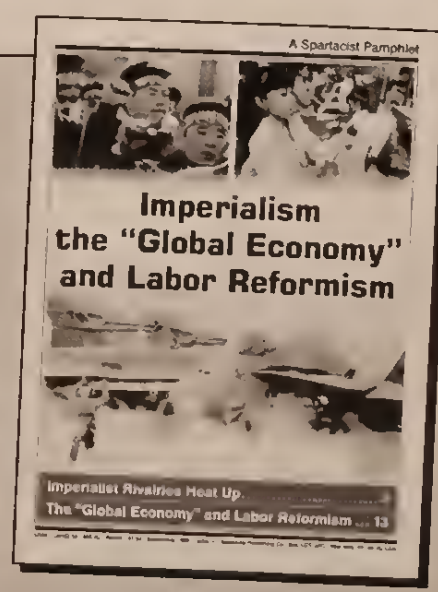
April 2008 Philadelphia demonstration for death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.





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WORKERS VANGUARD

For Proletarian Internationalism, Not Appeals to Imperialism!

Defend the Palestinians Against Zionist State Terror!

The following article is reprinted from Workers Hammer *No. 211 (Summer 2010), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League.*

WORKERS HAMMER

Particularly since the Zionist rulers' massacre on the Gaza aid flotilla, many defenders of the oppressed Palestinians have renewed their calls for "boycotts, disinvestment and sanctions" (BDS) against Israel. As revolutionary internationalists, we support time-limited trade union actions against the Israeli state. An example is the Swedish dock workers' action boycotting Israeli ships and goods coming from or destined for Israel from 22 to 29 June in protest against Israel's attack on the "Freedom Flotilla." In general, we are in favour of the trade unions refusing to handle *military* goods being shipped to Israel, which would be a blow not only against the Zionist rulers but also against the British, U.S. and other imperialist ruling classes.

But while we support the proposed action of the Swedish dockers, we oppose the political strategy of the reformist union bureaucracies that initiated it. While raising the supportable demand for lifting the blockade of Gaza, the call for the Swedish workers action also demands that "Israel pays respect to international law" and calls for "a general blockade of Israeli goods until the rights of the Palestinian people are guaranteed and the blockade of Gaza is lifted." In a similar vein, a recent statement signed by British union leaders Tony Woodley, Dave Prentis, Billy Hayes, Bob Crow and Mark Serwotka says: "We call on the British government and the European Union to suspend the EU-Israel association agreement and to end their support for the blockade and collective punishment of the men, women and children of Gaza. We call for support for a policy of boycott of Israeli products, disinvestment from Israeli companies and sanctions against Israel until justice for the Palestinian people has been achieved" (*Guardian*, 5 June).

We are politically opposed to standing boycotts and to campaigns for disinvestment and sanctions against Israel, which are counterposed to the international working-class struggle on which the liberation of the Palestinians is premised. BDS campaigns serve to promote illusions in the benign nature of other capitalist powers—not least British imperialism—relative to Israel. If successful, boycott campaigns would hurt the working class of Israel, both Hebrew-speaking and Arab, causing mass layoffs and weakening its social power, which can and must be mobilised to smash the Zionist state from within through socialist revolution.

The reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) supports the strategy of BDS and explains its broad aims in an article titled "The Fight Against Israeli Apartheid" in *Socialist Worker* (19 June) which says:

> "The BDS strategy is to seek international support and solidarity until Israel complies with international law: that means Israel must end the occupation of the West Bank and the blockade of Gaza and apply its own laws equitably and universally to Jew and to Arab alike.
>
> "BDS is about building an international movement to isolate Israel economically, culturally and academically. It is about persuading artists, writers, and performers not to work in Israel—following the examples of Gil Scott-Heron, Elvis Costello and others. It is about identifying Israeli products that are imported into Britain—not just those produced by settlements on illegally confiscated Palestinian resources—and pressing importers and outlets not to stock them. It is about gathering from supermarket shelves all products illegally produced in the West Bank and presenting them to the managers to help them avoid prosecution for selling stolen goods."

The article notes that "BDS is NOT about boycotting individual Israeli scholars or academics," but is an "institutional boycott." In the face of a vicious Zionist outcry against British unions which had called for academic boycotts of Israel in 2006 we wrote: "The Spartacist League and the Spartacus Youth Group call for the defence of the UCU [University and College Union] and other unions and organisations against the Zionist backlash and recognise that the boycott campaign is motivated out of solidarity with the oppressed Palestinians" (*Workers Hammer* No. 196, Autumn 2006). At the same time, we noted that:

> "The university unions' boycott, which is part of the wider divestment campaign against Israel, represents an appeal to the supposed morality of British and European academic institutions and funding bodies to sever any links with the brutally oppressive and murderous Israeli regime. The problem with this is that the universities in Britain are no less attached to the British state than they are to the Israeli state in Israel. And the British imperialist state is no less bloody than the Israeli state."

From India to Kenya, Iraq, Afghanistan and Northern Ireland, British imperialism has left a trail of carnage around the globe throughout its history. The present bloody mess in the Near East is itself the legacy of the "divide-and-rule" machinations of British imperialism when it was the dominant world power.

Workers Hammer

London, June 5: Thousands protest Zionist massacre on *Mavi Marmara*, demand end to blockade of Gaza.

On Boycotts, Disinvestment and Sanctions

Appealing to the blood-soaked British imperialists, *Socialist Worker* (5 June) put forward a call that "We must force Britain to break all links with Israel, including shutting down its embassy." The notion that the British government, corporations or campus administrations (or for that matter, the EU or the UN) can be "persuaded" to promote economic and social justice is ludicrous. But the programme of the SWP rests on the myth that British imperialism can be pressured into acting on behalf of the oppressed and perpetuates the very illusions in imperialist "democracy" that Marxists seek to destroy. As we said in "Zionist Backlash over 'Boycott Israel'" (*Workers Hammer* No. 196, Autumn 2006):

> "Why not call for a boycott of all British consumer goods, protesting the British rulers' brutality against the oppressed Catholic minority in Northern Ireland, not to mention British imperialism's role in the subjugation of Iraq and Afghanistan? Not only does this promote illusions in the 'democratic' and 'civilised' nature of other capitalist powers and corporations which the campaign seeks to dissuade from doing business with Israel, such a campaign is actually anti-working class."

Boycotts and Apartheid South Africa

The "boycott, disinvestment and sanctions" campaign is consciously modelled on the campaign for disinvestment from and sanctions against apartheid South Africa in the 1980s. Writing in the *Guardian* (10 January 2009), Naomi Klein argued that "The best strategy to end the increasingly bloody occupation is for Israel to become the target of the kind of global movement that put an end to apartheid in South Africa." The disinvestment campaign against South Africa in Europe and North America was centrally promoted by the bourgeois-nationalist African National Congress (ANC). It was based on a claim that South African capitalism could be fundamentally reformed through pressure from "democratic" imperialist powers such as the U.S. and Britain. In fact, it was not disinvestment, but the mass social struggles of the black and other non-white toilers, centred on the working class, which brought an end to direct white-supremacist rule in South Africa. The significant wage gains won by black class struggle and the instability caused by a growing strike movement deterred investment in South Africa.

At the time, our organisation uniquely told the truth: that disinvestment was *at best* an empty moral gesture; that if foreign companies did withdraw substantial productive assets this would hurt black workers and weaken the powerful black union movement; and, most crucially, that it was obscene to look to U.S. imperialism and its British junior partner as a

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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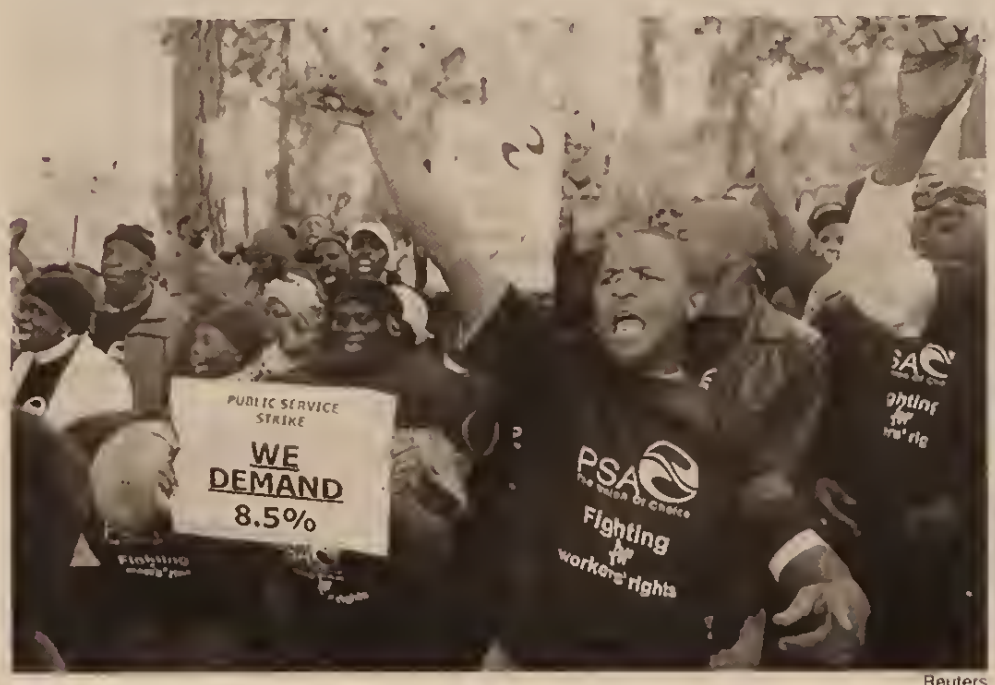
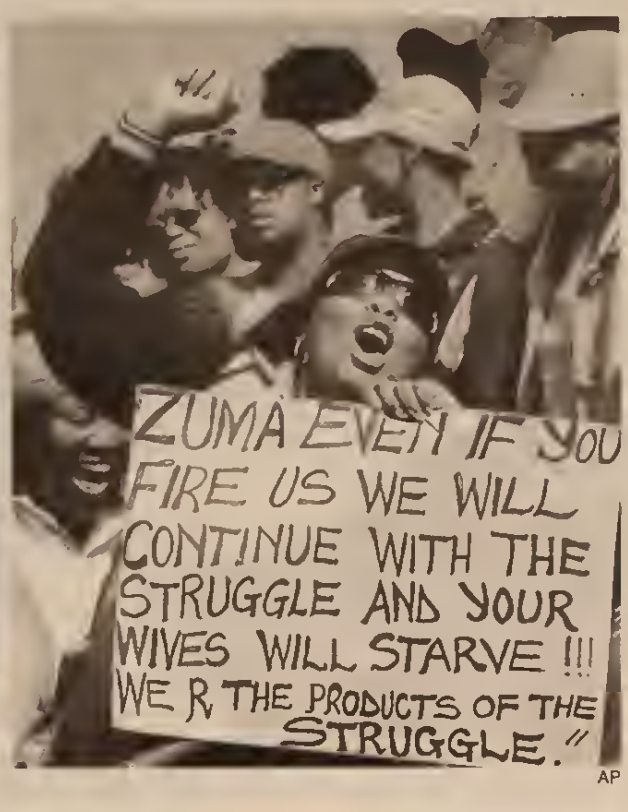
No. 964 | GCU C-701 | 10 September 2010

South Africa: Capitalist Government Shaken by Public Workers Strike



Reuters



AP

Left: Striking public workers rally in Pretoria on August 10. Right: Teachers union protests in Soweto on August 20, two days after COSATU unions joined in nationwide strike.

Break with the Bourgeois Tripartite Alliance! For a Black-Centered Workers Government!

SEPTEMBER 6—Teachers, nurses and other public service workers are furious over today's announcement that union bureaucrats have "suspended" their three-week nationwide strike for 21 days. Shutting down schools, hospitals and government offices, this battle brought the predominantly black working class into direct conflict with the capitalist government of the Tripartite Alliance—the African National Congress (ANC), South African Communist Party (SACP) and Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).

The union tops are desperately trying to get workers, who have been fighting for an 8.6 percent pay hike and a 1,000-rand ($137) monthly housing allotment, to cave in to the government's terms of 7.5 percent and R800. Last week, workers defiantly rejected that same offer, which was drawn up after South African president Jacob Zuma returned from a trip to China and insisted on an end to the strike. In the Johannesburg area today, our comrades of Spartacist South Africa report, members of the South African Democratic Teachers' Union attending a union rally denounced the sellout, while at a mass meeting of the National Education Health and Allied Workers Union, local leaders were pelted with eggs by the membership.

Involving 19 COSATU unions and others grouped in the Independent Labour Caucus, the strike, which included white workers, was preceded by walkouts by the independent Public Servants Association on July 29 and 30 and on August 10, when COSATU unions also struck. Public sector workers bitterly recall that after going on strike for four weeks in 2007, many never received the full pay and benefits package promised at the time.

Government spokesmen lecture the workers that there is "no money" to meet their demands. Dripping with sheer class contempt, the London *Economist* (2 September) intoned: "The above-inflation pay increases that Cosatu has claimed over the past five years have swelled government expenditure and crowded out spending on worthier causes." This semi-official organ of British and American bankers portrays unionized South African workers as some kind of privileged layer. The reality is that superexploited labor—black, Coloured (mixed race) and Indian—remains the bedrock of South African capitalism, 16 years after the end of white-supremacist apartheid rule.

Before the ongoing strike even started, COSATU general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi parroted the capitalist rulers' poverty pleas in trying to head off the strike. Once the strike began, Vavi, under pressure from the base of the unions, mouthed some criticisms of the government and "corrupt" officials. But this was for the purpose of retaining his authority with a restive membership, the better to push through a sellout. Vavi's service to Zuma & Co. is a clear expression of the role of the COSATU bureaucracy, which heavily overlaps with the leadership of the SACP, as the labor lieutenants of the (overwhelmingly white) capitalist class. As the labor face of neo-apartheid capitalism, their job is to ***contain*** class struggle.

Class tensions in South Africa reached a boiling point in recent months amid growing disillusionment with Zuma, who was billed as "pro-worker" by the COSATU and SACP tops. Transnet workers, who run the state-owned freight train network, pipelines and ports, won an 11 percent raise in May after a 17-day strike halted exports. In June, workers at the state-owned electricity generator Eskom also won a 9 percent wage increase and a 1,500 rand housing allowance after they threatened to turn the lights out during the World Cup. Following an auto assembly strike by 30,000 workers in August, some 7,000 members of the National Union of Metalworkers (NUMSA) in the tire industry and 40,000 more at gas stations, auto parts plants and dealerships are currently on strike, bringing production at several auto manufacturers to a halt. More than 8,000 union miners are also on strike.

Uniquely in sub-Saharan Africa, the South African proletariat is powerfully concentrated in mining, manufacturing and other industries. This gives it the potential to lead the oppressed and destitute

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Honduras: Massive Struggles Under Military Repression....3

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From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

Punishing Lynne

Lynne Stewart, the activist lawyer, was recently sentenced to 10 years in prison.

This outstanding lawyer, a 70 year old grandmother, who is facing the serious threat of breast cancer, was originally sentenced to 2 years and 4 months, but the federal appeals court apparently felt that wasn't enough.

The same appeals courts that traditionally reverse the convictions of cops who torture or kill Black citizens, and who traditionally rely on the judgments of the trial courts, reversed Stewart's sentence as not tough enough.

So much for judicial tradition.

For Lynne's tradition wasn't that of the tony, tie and tails law firms of downtown Manhattan. She didn't represent the rich, the powerful, the well-heeled.

She represented the poor, the oppressed, the destitute and the dispossessed; the Black, the Latino, the Arab, the damned; those whom Frantz Fanon famously called "the wretched of the earth."

A juxtaposition: Many, many lawyers on the Office of Legal Counsel, in the White House, the CIA, and the Defense Dept. violated criminal laws, the military legal code, the Geneva Conventions, and the Convention Against Torture (CAT) [not to mention the U.S. Constitution!] to aid and abet violations of law—for years.

Guess how many of them faced trial? Guess how many of them will in future?

How many of them will ever face prison?

None, None—and none.

For their crimes were on behalf of the powerful; the state; hence their immunity.

Or consider what is known in international law as the "supreme crime": wars of aggression.

Iraq will be a basket case for generations, thanks to American arrogance and greed.

Will anybody be brought to book for this crime, that shattered a nation, that sent millions into exile, and killed perhaps a million men, women and children?

Don't hold your breath.

There are still black sites, secret prisons, where tortures happen daily. There is still extraordinary renditions—clear violations of the Convention Against Torture (CAT).

But politicians are doing it—not to "protect" the nation—but to secure elections. Torture for votes.

And a 70 year old grandmother, a lawyer, is sent to prison for 10 years—for violating a prison rule that is an unconstitutional relic of the so-called war on terror.

This is what an empire in decline looks like.

18 July 2010

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Send urgently needed contributions for Mumia's legal defense, made payable to "National Lawyers Guild Foundation" and earmarked for "Mumia," to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, P.O. Box 2012, New York, NY 10159.

If you wish to correspond with Mumia, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

Letter

On Nepal and Caste Oppression

July 31, 2010

To the editor:

Your statement in "India: Down With Government War on Maoists, Tribal Peoples!" (WV 962) that "[b]y 2006, Maoist forces [in Nepal]...controlled up to 80 percent of the countryside, where they enacted significant social reforms including...an end to the caste system" mars an otherwise fine and important article. It gives a deeply false picture of the nature of caste oppression in South Asia and of the social process that will be required to remove it.

Comradely greetings,
Alan and Sarah

***WV* replies:** The formulation about ending caste oppression was indeed misleading. Multiple sources describe the impact of the Maoists' reforms in the countryside, notably for women. Maoist forces also made significant moves against the caste system, declaring that caste discrimination was banned in the zones they controlled. While the Maoists made incursions into the caste system, we understand that caste oppression is deeply intertwined with capitalist exploitation in South Asia and cannot be ended by fiat alone. It will take proletarian socialist revolution, combined with agrarian revolution in the countryside, to lay the material basis for ending the caste system, the oppression of women and all forms of social oppression, as laid out elsewhere in the article.■

TROTSKY

LENIN

For Proletarian Internationalist Struggle Against U.S. Imperialism!

As emphasized in a document adopted at the founding conference of the Fourth International, communists in the U.S. have a special duty to fight against U.S. imperialism's military and economic rape of its colonies and neocolonies in Latin America and elsewhere. (The document refers to the Philippines and Hawaii, which were both colonial territories of the U.S. at the time.) In the advanced capitalist countries and in the countries under their boot, the prerequisite for revolutionary struggle to overturn the imperialist order is the political independence of the proletarian vanguard from all bourgeois and petty-bourgeois forces.

One of the primary concerns of the United States section of the Fourth International, in the struggle against American imperialism, is the support of all genuinely progressive revolutionary movements directed against American imperialism in Latin America or the Pacific (the Philippines, Hawaii, Samoa, etc.) or against the Wall Street puppet dictatorships in those countries, while preserving its complete organizational and political independence, reserving and exercising the right to organize the working class in a separate movement and the right to present its own independent program as against the petty bourgeois, vacillating, and often treacherous program and activities of the nationalists....

The capitulation of the national bourgeoisie of the Philippines to American imperialist dominance, as well as the attempts by certain sections of the North American bourgeoisie to misuse the sentiment for national independence for their own reactionary ends, reveal the indispensability of proletarian class leadership of the colonial and semicolonial countries as the only assurance that genuine national independence will be fought for seriously and consistently and be achieved. At the same time, the Fourth Internationalists point out that none of the countries of Latin America or the Pacific which are now under the domination of American imperialism to one degree or another, is able either to attain complete freedom from foreign oppression or to retain such freedom for any length of time if it confines its struggle to the efforts of its own self. Only a union of the Latin American peoples, striving towards the goal of a united socialist America and allied in the struggle with the revolutionary proletariat of the United States, would present a force strong enough to contend successfully with North American imperialism.

—"Thesis on the World Role of American Imperialism" (September 1938)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

The closing date for news in this issue is September 7.

No. 964 **10 September 2010**

Spartacus Youth Club Events

TORONTO

Wednesday, Sept. 15, 6 p.m.

The Principles of Communism: Who We Are and What We Fight For

University of Toronto
Ontario Institute
for Studies in Education
252 Bloor St. West, Room 4420

Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
spartcan@on.aibn.com

VANCOUVER

Wednesday, Sept. 22, 6:30 p.m.

The Origins of Marxism

University of British Columbia
Student Union Building
Room 42V

Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
trotskyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

NEW YORK CITY

Thursday, Sept. 23, 7:30 p.m.

Meet the Marxists at CCNY

La Pregunta Arts Cafe
1528 Amsterdam Ave.
(between 135th and 136th St.)

For more information:
(212) 267-1025 • nysl@tiac.net

CHICAGO

Wednesday, Sept. 15, 6:30 p.m.

The Fight to Build a Revolutionary Workers Party

University of Illinois at Chicago
African American Cultural Center
Gallery Room 207
Addams Hall
830 S. Halsted Street

(take Blue Line—UIC Halsted stop)

Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
chicagosyc@sbcglobal.net

BAY AREA

Saturday, Sept. 25, 3 p.m.

Workers Vanguard Readers Circle

Racist Police Terror and the Killing of Oscar Grant

The Fight for Black Freedom and for Socialist Revolution

1634 Telegraph Ave., Oakland

(near corner of 17th and Telegraph and 19th St. BART Station; left-hand doorbell)

Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
sycbayarea@sbcglobal.net

Visit the ICL Web Site:
www.icl-fi.org

Honduras: Massive Struggles Under Military Repression

AP

Reuters

Left: Soldiers surround presidential palace in Tegucigalpa during 28 June 2009 coup against Manuel Zelaya. Right: Pro-Zelaya resistance members and teachers organizations march in capital, February 25.

Forge an Internationalist Revolutionary Workers Party!

Sharp social struggles have rocked the impoverished U.S. neocolony of Honduras ever since the June 2009 military overthrow of bourgeois populist president Manuel "Mel" Zelaya. An estimated 50,000 people protested in the streets of the capital city of Tegucigalpa this May Day, and thousands throughout the country marched in protest on June 28, the anniversary of the coup. The 65,000-strong teachers union has been on strike since August 9, fighting against the government's withholding over $150 million from the union retirement fund and also against plans to privatize teacher training schools.

In solidarity with the teachers, union federations are calling for strikes on September 7 and October 12 as a step toward a general strike, demanding an increase in the minimum wage and opposing the privatization of public services. There have also been protests by peasants demanding cheap credit and defending a land reform decree issued under Zelaya. These courageous expressions of popular opposition to the coup regime are taking place despite severe repression by the military, police and shadowy death squads. Dozens of oppositionists have been murdered since the coup, and thousands have been arrested, kidnapped, tortured, raped or beaten.

Heavily boycotted elections in November 2009 installed Porfirio Lobo of the National Party as the new president, replacing Liberal Party coup leader Roberto Micheletti as civilian head of the military-backed government. After his January inauguration, Lobo amnestied the coup participants and booted Zelaya, who had reentered Honduras and received asylum in the Brazilian Embassy, into exile in the Dominican Republic. The Obama administration praised these efforts at "national reconciliation" and has lobbied hard for international recognition of the Lobo government. Meanwhile, as documented by numerous human rights groups, the "new" Honduran regime immediately intensified repression, particularly targeting trade unionists, journalists and their families, as well as leaders and supporters of the National Front of Popular Resistance (FNRP)—a mass pro-Zelaya bourgeois populist movement that formed immediately after the coup.

The June 2009 coup by the Honduran military was instigated by U.S. imperialism and/or its Honduran lackeys. The Zelaya presidency had increasingly taken on a populist character after being confronted with social turmoil marked by strikes, land occupations and protests. Zelaya implemented various ameliorative reforms to head off social unrest, and in 2008 he allied with Venezuela's populist president Hugo Chávez. These acts led to an intensified polarization in the bourgeoisie between Zelaya and his supporters on the one hand and the more hardline oligarchs, the Honduran military and the U.S. imperialists on the other. Local business owners were particularly outraged when, in December 2008, Zelaya announced a minimum-wage increase of 60 percent. A nonbinding referendum on convening a constituent assembly, which Zelaya scheduled for 28 June 2009, became the pretext for the military coup and state of siege.

This was not just an intra-bourgeois squabble in which the working class had no side. It was necessary for the proletariat to oppose the coup—which threatened the ability of the working class to organize in its own interests and struck a blow at all the downtrodden—and to defend the reforms won under Zelaya. Without giving any ***political*** support to Zelaya's bourgeois populist government, Marxists were duty-bound to ***militarily*** defend Zelaya and his supporters against the coup and to side with the masses on the streets, fighting for the proletariat to emerge under its own banner.

It is elementary for Marxists to defend bourgeois-democratic rights and other gains for workers and the oppressed when they come under attack. In Mexico in 2005, the right-wing National Action Party (PAN) government under Vicente Fox moved to ban the presidential candidacy of Andrés Manuel López Obrador of the bourgeois populist Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). While this was a juridical measure and not a military coup as in Honduras, our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México opposed the attack, declaring:

> "This attack would have represented a blow against the thin 'democratic' layer covering volatile Mexican capitalism and would have reinforced state tyranny. We Spartacists opposed the PAN's attack against the elementary democratic rights of the entire population: essentially the right of people to vote for whomever they want.... We took this position without giving the PRD any political support and while making clear the PRD's bourgeois and therefore inherently anti-worker nature."
>
> —"Mexico: López Obrador, Democratic Rights and the Tasks of the Working Class," *WV* Nos. 853 and 855, 2 September and 30 September 2005

Defense of Honduran trade unionists and others caught in the vise of brutal repression is in the direct interests of the proletariat internationally. Workers and leftists in the U.S. have a special duty to defend the Honduran masses. Since the proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine, the U.S. rulers have considered Central America and the Caribbean their own fiefdom. Despite some policy differences, the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations both helped set the stage for Zelaya's ouster, with the Obama White House subsequently propping up the coup government and strongly backing the successor Lobo regime. The Spartacist League/U.S. fights to mobilize opposition to U.S. imperialism based on proletarian class opposition to both capitalist parties, Democratic and Republican.

Central America and Permanent Revolution

Honduras is one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere, part of the Central American isthmus that is divided into small, marginal states under the U.S. imperialist boot. Until well after World War II, Honduras was the quintessential "banana republic," dominated by United Fruit and Standard Fruit. Today, however, the economy is no longer completely dependent on traditional agricultural exports. There is also a *maquiladora* light industrial export sector employing over 100,000 workers. To maintain its rule, the tiny and weak Honduran bourgeoisie relies on its bonapartist military officer corps and, crucially, on the backing of the American imperialists.

The role the Honduran rulers have played on behalf of U.S. imperialism in the region was clearly seen in the 1980s when U.S. military forces used Honduras—dubbed Washington's "unsinkable aircraft carrier"—as its strategic base of operations against Sandinista Nicaragua and leftist guerrilla forces in El Salvador and Guatemala. U.S. imperialism's dirty wars in Central America were part of its drive for the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, a degenerated workers state, and to roll back the gains of the Cuban Revolution, with leftist insurgents declared to be Cuban and Soviet proxies.

Honduras was a staging ground for the U.S.-backed *contra* counterrevolutionaries who sought the bloody overthrow of Nicaragua's left-nationalist Sandinista government. The 1979 Sandinista-led insurrection that overthrew the hated Somoza dictatorship shattered the capitalist state's repressive apparatus as the National Guard fled into exile (along with some of the bourgeoisie). We fought to defend the Nicaraguan revolution, calling on the workers to complete it by expropriating the remaining bourgeoisie and to extend socialist revolution throughout Central America. After a decade of attacks by the *contra* murderers and a U.S. starvation blockade, the Sandinistas' dead-end strategy of negotiating with the imperialists and allowing the local capitalists to retain

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Honduras...

(continued from page 3)

control of the economy demoralized the exhausted Nicaraguan masses. In 1990, a U.S.-supported bourgeois regime was elected, marking the reconsolidation of a capitalist state.

The U.S. also enlisted the Honduran military in its efforts to smash El Salvador's Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN)—a large left-wing guerrilla insurgency that fought against the murderous U.S.-backed military junta. We called for military victory to the Salvadoran leftists and for workers revolution, declaring that defense of Cuba and the USSR began in El Salvador. But a military victory for the insurgents was obstructed by the popular-frontist FMLN leadership. Embracing a class-collaborationist alliance with a "progressive" wing of the Salvadoran bourgeoisie, the FMLN sought a "negotiated solution" with the death-squad regime. The leftist forces eventually signed a sellout, U.S.-brokered settlement in 1992, an abject accommodation to the post-Soviet "new world order." Today's Sandinista and FMLN leaders serve as openly bourgeois politicians at the head of their respective capitalist states.

In the last decade, in much of Latin America popular revulsion at the nakedly pro-imperialist "neoliberal" governments has been channeled into support for a new layer of bourgeois populists, from Venezuela's Hugo Chávez and Bolivia's Evo Morales to Zelaya in Honduras. However, this shift is not "anti-capitalist." While posing as defenders of the oppressed and exploited masses, these rulers seek to co-opt and contain discontent within a capitalist framework, which necessarily means subordination to the world imperialist system. As Leon Trotsky, co-leader with V.I. Lenin of the October Revolution of 1917, wrote in "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay" (1940):

> "Inasmuch as the chief role in backward countries is not played by national but by foreign capitalism, the national bourgeoisie occupies, in the sense of its social position, a much more minor position than corresponds with the development of industry. Inasmuch as foreign capital does not import workers but proletarianizes the native population, the national proletariat soon begins playing the most important role in the life of the country. In these conditions the national government, to the extent that it tries to show resistance to foreign capital, is compelled to a greater or lesser degree to lean on the proletariat. On the other hand, the governments of those backward countries which consider it inescapable or more profitable for themselves to march shoulder to shoulder with foreign capital, destroy the labor organizations and institute a more or less totalitarian regime. Thus, the feebleness of the national bourgeoisie, the absence of traditions of municipal self-government, the pressure of foreign capitalism, and the relatively rapid growth of the proletariat, cut the ground from under any kind of stable democratic regime."

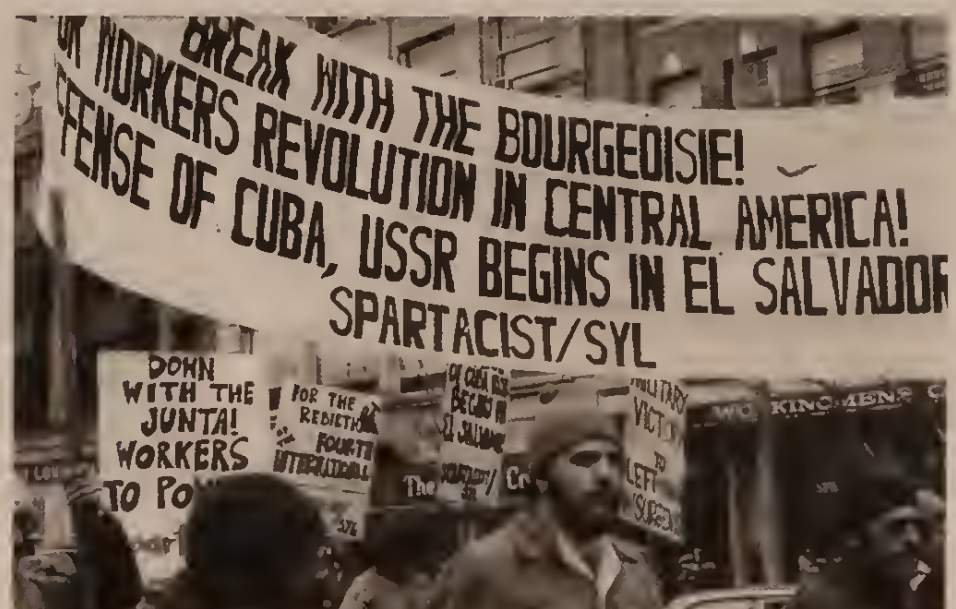
The key to social revolution in Honduras and the rest of Central and Latin America is that the proletariat emerge as the leadership of all the exploited and the oppressed, in political opposition to all wings of the capitalist class, "neoliberal" or populist. The example of the 1917 Russian Revolution, a stunning confirmation of Trotsky's theory and perspective of permanent revolution, points the way forward.

AP | Garrido/NY Times | La Tribuna | Libertad Digital

Bloody hands from 1980s death squads to 2009 Honduran coup (left to right): General Romeo Vásquez; coup regime adviser Billy Joya; U.S. Ambassador Hugo Llorens; State Department ghoul Otto Reich.

In seizing power under the leadership of Lenin's Bolsheviks, the working class took in its hands the historic democratic tasks previously associated with the bourgeois revolutions of the 17th and 18th centuries and moved on to begin the socialist reconstruction of society. The Soviet workers and peasants government abolished private ownership of land, calling on the poor peasants to complete the agrarian revolution against the landlords, and freed the country from the imperialist yoke. The workers state expropriated the capitalist class and took over the means of production and banking system, eventually leading to a collectivized, centrally planned economy. The Bolsheviks under Lenin and Trotsky understood that to achieve socialism—a classless society of material abundance—required the extension of proletarian revolution throughout Europe and to other advanced industrial countries.

There can be no liberation from imperialist domination, no real alleviation of the masses' desperate poverty short of a workers and peasants government—i.e., the dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the peasants. Especially in a tiny neocolonial country like Honduras, such a regime would have to fight to immediately extend socialist revolution throughout the Central American isthmus and to Mexico, with its powerful proletariat. This perspective must include the fight for proletarian revolution in the U.S. imperialist heartland, which, under a workers government, would provide massive economic and technological resources for the alleviation of poverty and qualitative leaps in development throughout the Americas. What is urgently necessary is to build Leninist parties as sections of a reforged Fourth International, whose purpose is to lead the working class to victory through socialist revolutions throughout the world.



WV Photo

Spartacist contingent at 1981 Boston protest against U.S. support to military junta in El Salvador.

Under the Thumb of U.S. Imperialism

Manuel Zelaya is a wealthy landowner who was elected president in 2005 as a mainstream bourgeois politician of the Liberal Party, which has tended to alternate with the National Party in power. In the first six months of his term, Zelaya faced more social protest than had occurred in the previous ten years. In response, he sanctioned wage hikes and increased government subsidies to the poor, which in Honduras make up two-thirds of the population. Zelaya also sought to reduce gas prices and high national energy costs by putting fuel supply contracts out to international bid. This is hardly radical, but it provoked the ire of the Honduran and multinational fuel monopolies.

Facing shortages manipulated by the fuel companies, and with independent gas stations threatening to close and bus drivers promising to strike, in late summer 2007 Zelaya authorized direct fuel imports and vowed to build government-owned fuel depots. In January 2008 Zelaya joined Hugo Chávez's oil pact PetroCaribe, which allowed him to sign up for favorable terms for fuel. In August of the same year, with the global economic meltdown in full swing and oil prices at a high, Zelaya signed on to Chávez's ALBA (Bolivarian Alternative of the Americas) trade and political alliance. In return, Venezuela offered to buy Honduran bonds worth $100 million, with the proceeds to be spent on housing for the poor. Chávez also offered a $30 million credit line toward farming and for four million low-energy light bulbs, while Cuba planned to provide more doctors and literacy teachers.

Honduran business interests opposed ALBA on the grounds that it would harm "free enterprise" and interfere with the U.S.-led Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), which is the equivalent of the NAFTA "free trade" rape of Mexico for Central America and the Dominican Republic. Former conservative president Ricardo Maduro warned, "Don't bite the hand that feeds you." Indeed, the alliance with Chávez did not please the representatives of U.S. imperialism. According to a 20 April article posted on the North American Congress on Latin America Web site, then-U.S. ambassador Charles Ford asserted on Honduran TV that a large portion of remittances from Honduran immigrants in the U.S. was the product of drug trafficking! With remittances making up over 20 percent of the Honduran GDP, this outrageous accusation was a none too subtle threat to withhold aid and increase deportations of Hondurans.

Zelaya wanted to have some say in how and where the American military operated in Honduras. In 2006 Zelaya met with Bush about his plans to convert part of the Soto Cano military air base, which houses 550 U.S. troops in Joint Task Force Bravo, into a civilian airport. At the same time, it was announced that a new military base would be built and made "available" to U.S. forces in the Mosquitia region in eastern Honduras. In 2009 Zelaya signed on to the Mérida Initiative supposedly aimed at drug trafficking in Central America and Mexico.

In the U.S., the "war on drugs" is a vehicle for government repression, particularly targeting blacks as well as Chicanos and Latino immigrants. In Latin America, it provides a pretext for extending imperialist domination and propping up pro-U.S. regimes; for example, the U.S. military has had a longstanding presence in Colombia, next door to Chávez's Venezuela. Under the banner of the "war on drugs," Costa Rica recently authorized the entry of 46 U.S. warships and 7,000 Marines. In June, scores of people were killed in Jamaica as the U.S. demanded that the government assist in hunting down purported gang leader Christopher Coke. We say: Down with the "war on drugs"! All U.S. military forces and bases out of Latin America and the Caribbean!

The U.S. military buildup in the region also targets the Cuban bureaucratically deformed workers state. The elimination of capitalist class rule in Cuba in 1960-61 led to enormous gains for working people, despite the rule of a bureaucratic nationalist caste led by Fidel Castro. We stand for the unconditional military defense of Cuba against U.S. imperialism and internal counterrevolution and call for U.S. out of Guantánamo. At the same time, we fight for a proletarian political revolution against the Castroite bureaucracy, which opposes the perspective of proletarian revolution in the Americas, favoring instead the quest for alliances with "friendly" bourgeois regimes.

U.S. Imperialism and the Honduran Coup

Polarizations in the Honduran bourgeoisie came to a head in March 2009

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when Zelaya, soon after decreeing the minimum wage hike, announced a vote to gauge popular support for placing a referendum for a constituent assembly on the ballot for the November elections. The nonbinding poll was declared illegal by the courts, and the Congress, led by Roberto Micheletti, passed a law to prevent the referendum. Meanwhile, Zelaya asked the military to provide security and logistics for the balloting (the norm under the constitution, which is itself a measure of institutionalized military bonapartism in Honduras).

On June 24, after the head of the military, General Romeo Vásquez, refused to comply, Zelaya fired him. The next day, the Supreme Court ruled that Vásquez be reinstated. That same day, Zelaya led hundreds of supporters in Tegucigalpa to a nearby military base to recover boxes of blank ballots that his opponents meant to destroy. Coup rumors flew as the military deployed troops in the capital. In the early morning hours on June 28, the military kidnapped Zelaya, still in his pajamas, and flew him out of the Soto Cano air base to Costa Rica. Demonstrators that day braved the state of siege to protest outside the presidential palace. Large protests and strikes immediately followed.

In the weeks leading up to the coup, U.S. Ambassador Hugo Llorens and Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Shannon Jr. had met with Zelaya's political and military opponents, purportedly to advise them to stay within constitutional bounds. (Llorens has some experience with coups—he was principal national security adviser to Bush on Venezuela during the failed U.S.-backed 2002 coup against Chávez.) The *New York Times* (30 June) quoted an unnamed U.S. official who said: "There was talk of how they might remove the president from office, how he could be arrested, on whose authority they could do that." The article continued, "But the official said that the speculation had focused on legal maneuvers to remove the president, not a coup."

While some Republican neocons openly supported the coup, the Democrats mainly struck a more critical posture, but with the same goal of achieving social stability in Honduras to better pursue untrammeled imperialist exploitation. The immediate public response of the Obama White House to the coup was studied neutrality, calling on "all political and social actors in Honduras to respect democratic norms." Diplomatic pressure from Latin America and elsewhere led Obama to change his tune the next day: "We believe that the coup was not legal and that President Zelaya remains the President of Honduras." Secretary of State Hillary Clinton qualified this by refusing to answer "yes" to a press conference question whether "restoring constitutional order" meant returning Zelaya to office. Zelaya repeatedly appealed to the Obama administration to do just that, without success.

Key Honduran coup plotters, and their advisers, have longstanding ties to the U.S. government and its bloody wars in Central America. General Vásquez twice attended the U.S. Army School of the Americas, notorious for instructing military officers in torture and other gruesome counterinsurgency techniques. Billy Joya, a key Micheletti adviser, headed the U.S.-trained Honduran Battalion 3-16—responsible for kidnapping, torturing and murdering hundreds of suspected leftists during the 1980s. U.S. figures who helped fuel the campaign against Zelaya included the sinister Otto Reich, former longtime head of the State Department's Latin America desk who in the 1980s acted as Ambassador John Negroponte's right-hand man in running the death squad and *contra* operations out of the embassy in Tegucigalpa. (Reich was also directly implicated in the short-lived 2002 anti-Chávez coup.)

In the Honduran coup's aftermath, the Obama administration orchestrated "dialogue" with both parties, discussing Zelaya's return under conditions acceptable to the coup regime. In late October 2009, Zelaya and Micheletti signed the "Tegucigalpa-San José Accord" in which Zelaya agreed to drop his proposal for a constituent assembly in return for being allowed to serve out his last weeks in office in a "national unity" government that would amnesty the coup plotters. However, the coup regime balked at Zelaya's return and stalled until the November elections. Widely boycotted, the elections were hailed by the U.S. and became the basis for pushing renewed diplomatic recognition of the Honduran regime.

Reuters photos

Tegucigalpa, August 27: Police fire tear gas at teachers' protest. Defiant teachers continue protest outside Pedagogical University following cop attack.

The FNRP Opposition Movement

Unions have been prominent in the protests since the coup, offering a glimpse of the potential power of the Honduran proletariat. However, the working class has not appeared in its own name. Opposition to the coup politically coalesced around the pro-Zelaya populist nationalism of what is today called the National Front of Popular Resistance. The FNRP's leadership includes union leaders, reformist leftists, feminists and black and indigenous rights activists. But as a July 12 FNRP communiqué lays out, first place in the National Front is reserved for Manuel Zelaya, "recognizing his leadership and placing him at the front of this project." Pro-Zelaya dissidents from the Liberal Party also consider themselves part of the FNRP.

The FNRP's manifesto, published one year after the coup, describes the resistance as a "combination of revolutionary forces." At the core of FNRP politics is bourgeois populism—opposition to neoliberalism in favor of a mythical "progressive" national capitalism. Its economic program is for a "mixed" economy that would cancel "illegal concessions granted under the neoliberal model and within strategic sectors in the country's economic life." This populist model is to be achieved through "patriotic, peaceful, democratic struggle" for a constituent assembly that will "refound" the country.

Marxists give no political support to bourgeois political formations such as the FNRP resistance movement, which subordinates the distinct class interests of the Honduran proletariat to those of the "progressive" bourgeoisie. What's needed is a revolutionary workers party, steeled in the fight for the political independence of the proletariat from all bourgeois parties and formations. Breaking from the nationalist class collaborationism of the FNRP, the Honduran proletariat must champion the demands and aspirations of the peasants and other oppressed strata for democratic rights, agrarian revolution and freedom from the imperialist yoke. These demands can be realized only through proletarian socialist revolution extending throughout the Americas.

Class collaboration in the name of "democratic struggle" and "national liberation" has a long and disastrous history in Latin America and beyond. As we wrote in the International Communist League's "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998):

> "The 'anti-imperialist united front' is the particular form that class collaboration most often assumes in the colonial and ex-colonial countries, from the liquidation of the Chinese Communist Party into Chiang Kai-shek's Guomindang in the 1920s to decades of prostration of the South African 'left' before the African National Congress (ANC), which has become the imperialist-sponsored front men for neo-apartheid capitalism. Today in Latin America, 'anti-Yankee' nationalism is the main tool whereby militant workers and insurgent peasants are induced to place their hopes in bourgeois 'radicals.' Trotsky's program of permanent revolution is the alternative to placing confidence in fantasies resting upon the backward, imperialist-dependent bourgeoisie of one's own oppressed country as the vehicle for liberation."

Reuters

Ousted Honduran president Zelaya welcomed by bourgeois populist Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez in Caracas, March 5.

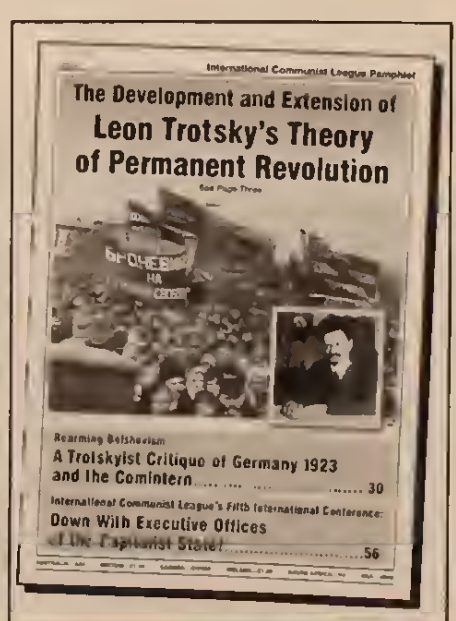
In sharp contrast, various reformist left groups uphold a program that is entirely within the bounds of capitalist class rule. The day after Zelaya's ouster, the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) looked to pressure the Obama administration to act against the coup, proclaiming in an editorial that "global outrage against the coup could change the calculations in Washington." Reinforcing the political subordination of the proletariat to its bourgeois class enemy, the PSL and much of the left internationally simply hails the FNRP and calls to reinstate Zelaya.

Dressing up nationalist populism with some "Trotskyist" clothing, the Mexican Liga de Trabajadores por el Socialismo (LTS) and its international organization, the Fracción Trotskista (FT), sometimes lay claim to the perspective of permanent revolution. But they distort the very essence of permanent revolution, which is premised on the proletariat leading all the oppressed in revolutionary struggle, independent from and in opposition to the national bourgeoisie. Instead, they complain that the bourgeois populists have failed to sufficiently lead an "anti-imperialist" struggle against the United States.

At an international FT gathering last month, one of its spokesmen talked of "the need to build a revolutionary political alternative" to the "strategies" of the bourgeois populists, based on "the independent organization of the workers" (*La Verdad Obrera*, 26 August). At the same time, the speaker complained that not only Brazil's Lula and Argentina's Kirchner but "also governments friendly to Zelaya, like Chávez in Venezuela and Correa in Ecuador, did nothing but make declarations—refusing to push for a mass movement in Latin America in order to defeat the coup-plotters!"

This is a whitewash of these bourgeois regimes. Chávez, Lula and their ilk live in *deadly fear* of the proletariat emerging as an independent force against oppression and imperialism, because that would challenge their own class rule. Populists seek to maneuver among the various imperialist powers, something Chávez can more easily do because of Venezuela's oil revenues. But whatever their rhetoric and policies, as administrators of capitalist wage slavery, they are ultimately incapable of breaking with the imperialists—they can only renegotiate the terms of their own subordination.

Zelaya's FNRP supporters say that he has "evolved." But he was and remains a bourgeois politician—no less the class opponent of the victory of the workers and the urban and rural poor than neoliberal politicians. And regardless of Zelaya's personal participation, the bourgeois-nationalist program of the FNRP is antithetical to working-class political independence. Throughout Latin America, what is needed are Trotskyist parties built in political struggle against the widespread illusions in populism and nationalism. The struggle for a Socialist Federation of Central America is closely linked to working-class struggle in Mexico, the Caribbean, South and North America. In the United States, the key to building a revolutionary workers party is to break the chains forged by the pro-imperialist trade-union bureaucracy that bind the working class and minorities to the parties of capital, particularly the Democratic Party. ***For workers revolution throughout the Americas!*** ■



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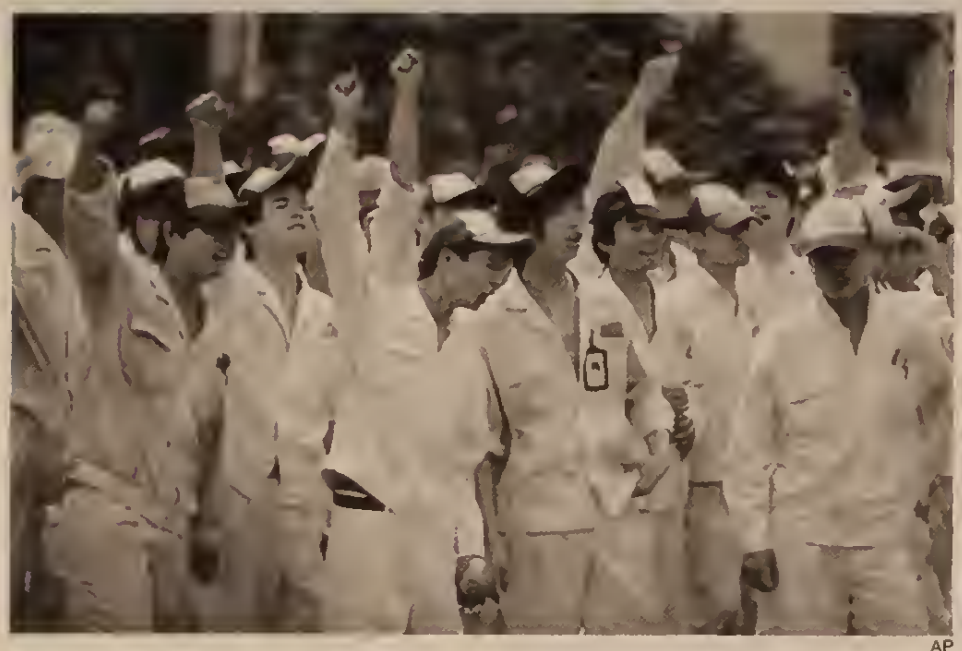

AP

AFP

Left: Workers strike for higher wages at Honda's Foshan auto parts plant in Guangdong Province, June 7. Right: The same day, workers striking at Taiwanese-owned rubber factory in Jiangsu Province clash with police.

Defend the Chinese Deformed Workers State Against Imperialism, Capitalist Counterrevolution!

For Proletarian Political Revolution!

PART ONE

This past spring, China experienced a major strike wave involving young migrant workers employed mainly in factories owned by Japanese, other foreign and offshore Chinese capital. It was centered in the southern coastal province of Guangdong, the main region in the country producing light manufactures for export. Three dozen strikes took place in that province in the span of a month and a half. The upsurge of labor militancy extended to other industrial regions. For example, workers at a Taiwanese-owned rubber plant near Shanghai clashed with police; around 50 workers were injured. In most cases, the strikes were settled quickly with wage increases and other gains for the workers. Recognizing in its own way the significance of these developments, the *Economist* (31 July), a house organ for American and British finance capital, headlined an editorial: "The Rising Power of the Chinese Worker."

The strike wave began in mid May at a Honda plant in Foshan that produces transmissions for the company's four auto assembly plants in China. As a result of the work stoppage, which lasted nearly three weeks, production in all of these plants came to a halt. The strike, which ended with a wage increase averaging 30 percent, was viewed as an important victory for the workers.

Strikes are not uncommon in China. However, they are usually very short-lived, quickly settled and/or quickly suppressed. And they are almost never reported in the government-directed media for fear that doing so would encourage other workers to engage in similar actions. That is just what happened in the case of the Foshan Honda strike, as the conflict between Chinese workers and the Japanese auto giant became a focus of domestic as well as international attention. Subsequently, the authorities reverted to a policy of clamping down on news of labor unrest.

China Photos

Ship under construction in Chongqing, February 2009. China's stimulus package has massively increased production in state-owned industries and boosted investment in infrastructure.

Organization and leadership of the strikes were provided by worker activists outside the bureaucratic structures of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), the official union federation, tied to the ruling Communist Party (CCP). One strike leader, Li Xiaojuan, a 20-year-old woman worker at the Foshan Honda plant, wrote an open letter on behalf of the negotiating committee that declared:

> "We must maintain a high degree of unity and not let the representatives of Capital divide us.... This factory's profits are the fruits of our bitter toil.... This struggle is not just about the interests of our 1,800 workers. We also care about the rights and interests of all Chinese workers."
>
> — quoted in *Financial Times* (London), 10 June

The strike wave in the capitalist sector of its industrial economy underscores the fundamental social contradictions of China as a bureaucratically deformed workers state. As Trotskyists (revolutionary Marxists), we strongly supported the strikes and emphasized that the rights and interests of Chinese workers require a leadership with a comprehensive program of class struggle at the political as well as economic levels:

> "Chinese workers need a class-struggle leadership to advance their struggle to wrest as much as possible from the capitalist companies that are exploiting them, fight the ravages of inflation and improve their working and living conditions. Workers in state-owned industry also need such a leadership to protect and advance their living standards and to fight against bureaucratic abuse."
>
> — "Militant Strike Wave in China," *WV* No. 961, 2 July

The contradictions besetting the Chinese deformed workers state will ultimately be resolved either by a proletarian political revolution, opening the road to socialism, or capitalist counterrevolution and imperialist re-enslavement.

A Bureaucratically Deformed Workers State

The People's Republic of China emerged from the 1949 Revolution—a social revolution of world-historic significance in which the peasant-based forces led by the Communist Party of Mao Zedong defeated the U.S.-backed puppet regime of Chiang Kai-shek's Guomindang. Hundreds of millions of peasants rose up and seized the land on which their forebears had been exploited from time immemorial. The subsequent creation of a centrally planned, collectivized economy laid the basis for enormous social gains for both urban workers and rural toilers. The revolution enabled women to advance by magnitudes over their previous miserable status, which was rooted in the old Confucian order and marked by such practices as forced marriage and concubinage. A nation that had been ravaged and divided by foreign powers was unified and freed from imperialist domination.

However, the workers state that issued from the Revolution was deformed from its inception under the rule of Mao's CCP regime, the political apparatus of a privileged bureaucratic caste resting atop the workers state. Unlike the Russian October Revolution of 1917, which was carried out by a class-conscious proletariat guided by the Bolshevik internationalism of Lenin and Trotsky, the Chinese Revolution was the result of peasant guerrilla war led by Stalinist-nationalist forces. Patterned after the Stalinist bureaucracy that usurped political power in the USSR beginning in 1923-24, Mao's regime and those of his successors, including Hu Jintao today, have preached the profoundly anti-Marxist notion that socialism—a classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—can be built in a single country. In practice, "socialism in one country" has meant accommodation to world imperialism and opposition to the perspective of international workers revolution that is essential for the advance to socialism.

After a brief interregnum following the death of Mao in 1976, his successor, Deng Xiaoping, scrapped centralized economic planning and began implementing a number of market-oriented policies and practices. In the late 1990s, the regime headed by Jiang Zemin and Zhu Rongji privatized a large number of

small- and medium-sized state-owned enterprises (SOEs). Under "market socialism," China has attracted large-scale investment, mainly in manufacturing, by Western and Japanese corporations and by the offshore Chinese bourgeoisie in Taiwan, Hong Kong and elsewhere, with the CCP regime acting as labor contractors. On the mainland, there has also emerged a sizable class of indigenous capitalist entrepreneurs, many with familial and financial ties to the CCP officialdom.

One consequence of these developments is the widespread belief in the Western world, extending across the political spectrum, that China, although still ruled by a party calling itself "Communist," has become capitalist. In reality, China remains a bureaucratically deformed workers state. The core of the industrial economy—steel and non-ferrous metals, heavy electrical equipment, telecommunications, oil extraction and refining, petrochemicals—continues to be based on state-owned enterprises. Outside of the foreign and offshore Chinese capitalist sector, almost all productive investment is channeled through the government and state-controlled banks. The *Economist* (10 July) pointed out that although China's large banks "make money and have the trappings of public companies, the state owns a majority stake and the Communist Party appoints the top brass."

The *non*-capitalist character of China's economy has been clearly demonstrated by the effectiveness of the government's almost $600 billion stimulus program—mainly investment in infrastructure and expanding bank lending—introduced in the fall of 2008 as the First World capitalist economies were plummeting. The sudden collapse of its export markets in North America and West Europe was a heavy blow to China's economy. The rate of growth of the gross domestic product fell from near 13 percent in 2007 to under 7 percent in the last quarter of 2008. Since then, however, while the capitalist world has remained mired in a deep downturn, economic growth in China has revived rapidly, reaching almost 12 percent in the first quarter of this year before edging down slightly in the second quarter. Noting one significant effect of the skyrocketing levels of investment by state-controlled companies, the *New York Times* (29 August) reported that "the proportion of industrial production by companies controlled by the Chinese state edged up last year, checking a slow but seemingly inevitable eclipse."

Corbis

People's Liberation Army marches through Beijing, June 1949.

However much the Beijing Stalinists try to accommodate world imperialism, the U.S. and other major capitalist powers are determined to reverse the 1949 Revolution, reimposing semicolonial subjugation on China and reducing its economy to a giant capitalist sweatshop. Toward that end, they are utilizing economic penetration, increased military pressure from without and political subversion internally, for example, by the reactionary Buddhist forces in Tibet. The U.S. continues to provide capitalist Taiwan with advanced weaponry while itself extending its military reach in Central Asia and other areas near China. As Trotskyists, we stand for the unconditional military defense of China against imperialism and internal counterrevolution.

In answer to the aspirations of the Chinese workers and rural toilers for democratic rights and a government that represents their needs and interests, we stand for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and replace it with a government elected by workers and peasants councils and committed to revolutionary internationalism. Such a government would fight against bureaucratic arbitrariness and corruption. It would expropriate the new class of domestic capitalist entrepreneurs and renegotiate the terms of foreign investment in the interests of the working people. It would create a centrally planned and managed economy under conditions of workers democracy—not the autarkic, bureaucratic commandism of the Mao era, when "egalitarianism" meant an equalization of poverty. While struggling to provide at least a basic level of economic security for the whole population, a genuine communist leadership would understand that achieving material prosperity for all hinges on the struggle for socialist revolution in the centers of world capitalism.

The Honda Strikes

Migrant workers in China's capitalist-owned factories are often forced to work 60 to 70 hours a week at wages barely above subsistence levels. The brutal conditions they endure were graphically exposed last spring by the widely publicized suicides of workers at the huge Foxconn industrial complex, employing more than 300,000, in Guangdong. At least a dozen workers have killed themselves since the beginning of the year. Owned by a Taiwanese company, Foxconn is the world's largest contract electronics manufacturer, making products for Apple, Dell and Hewlett-Packard. A Hong Kong-based businessman who toured the site described conditions on the factory floor as "almost militaristic and kind of scary" (*Financial Times*, 11 June). Popular outrage over the suicides at Foxconn doubtless contributed to widespread sympathy and support for the strikes at Honda and other capitalist-owned firms.

The strike at the Honda transmission plant in Foshan was initiated by a 24-year-old worker, Tan Zhiqing, from the interior province of Hunan, a major supplier of migrant labor. A spirit of rebelliousness is celebrated in the popular culture of Hunan, Mao Zedong's birthplace. Seeing his real earnings shrinking because of inflation, Tan decided to quit Honda and seek higher pay elsewhere. He had earlier approached local ACFTU officials about pressuring management to increase wages but got no response from them. In late April, he and a friend and co-worker named Xiao Xiao submitted a standard one-month-in-advance notice of their intention to leave the company. Tan subsequently told a reporter from *China News Weekly* (2 June): "Since I was going to quit anyway, I thought I might as well do something for the benefit of my fellow-workers."

Toward that end, he and Xiao organized secret meetings with a small number of co-workers to plan a work stoppage. On May 17, Tan pushed the emergency button, stopping the assembly line where he was working, and some 50 workers walked off the job. At first, most workers were hesitant to go on strike for fear of reprisals. Production resumed temporarily when management agreed to negotiate with workers' representatives who were elected from the different departments. A turning point came on May 21-22 when the company offered a wage increase of less than 10 percent of what the workers were demanding and then fired Tan and Xiao. The strike now resumed in earnest, with much greater support and resolve. Strikers routinely sang the national anthem and also an official song of the Chinese military, "Unity Is Strength," here referring to workers instead of soldiers.

Other management policies intended to weaken the strike also backfired. A large section of the workforce is comprised of teenage trainees from technical schools whose wages were much lower than those of regular workers. In late May, the company demanded that the trainees sign a "memorandum of undertaking" pledging "never to lead, organize, partake in go-slows, stop work or strike." Not only did most refuse to sign but, as the *China News Weekly* (2 June) reported, the trainees "were the staunchest supporters of the strike."

From the outset, the local ACFTU bureaucrats were sidelined during the strike. One of the workers' demands was "a reorganization of the local trade union: re-elections should be held for union chairman and other representatives." Union officials sat in on the negotiations, purportedly to "mediate" between the two sides. Some union functionaries were evidently rankled by their visible loss of authority. On May 31, a large squad of ACFTU goons assaulted striking workers. The next day, however, union officials issued a public apology while downplaying the incident and claiming it was a result of "mutual misunderstandings." In mid June, the head of the Guangdong province ACFTU promised that the Foshan Honda plant would he a "pilot site" in "allowing members to genuinely elect a union chair."

Within days after the Foshan strike ended, workers at two other Honda parts plants went out. One of these strikes was settled quickly. However, the strike at Honda Lock turned into a bitter conflict, the outcome of which was very different than that at Foshan. Using desktop computers, activists uploaded video of security guards beating workers. In this case, both the Honda management and

continued on page 8

Robert Haidinger

Above: Sleek modern office buildings in Shanghai's Pudong district. Below: Migrant workers at construction site in city of Fuzhou live with families in converted shipping containers.

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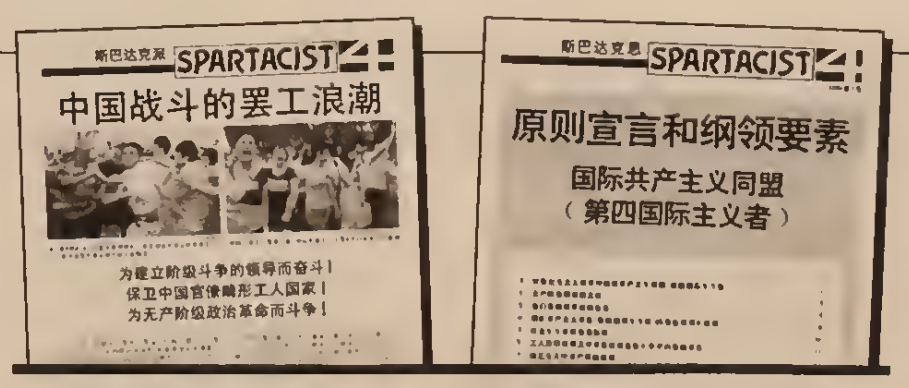

Militant Strike Wave in China
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(translated from *WV* No. 961, 2 July 2010)
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China...

(continued from page 7)

CCP authorities, at least at the local level, took a harder line. The company recruited "replacement workers" (scabs) and threatened to fire those strikers who refused to accept the wage increase offered. Journalists seeking to report on the strike were taken away from the plant by local police.

CCP Regime's Response to Strikes

The initial extensive coverage of the Foshan Honda strike in the domestic media was accompanied by an equally unusual candor about the country's increasing social inequalities. Citing a leader of the ACFTU, the official English-language *China Daily* (13 May) reported that the share of the country's gross domestic product going to workers' wages fell from 57 percent in 1983 to 37 percent in 2005. An editorial in the *Global Times* (2 June), a *People's Daily* spin-off, stated:

> "Admittedly, in the three decades of opening-up, ordinary workers are among those who have received the smallest share of economic prosperity....
>
> "The temporary stoppage of production lines in the four Honda factories, at a time of increasing market demand for the Japanese-brand cars, highlights the necessity of organized labor protection in Chinese factories."

More recently, an ACFTU spokesman laid out an official policy of promoting "the direct election of grassroots trade union leaders" (*People's Daily* online, 31 August).

Clearly, influential elements in the bureaucracy are concerned about the danger (to themselves) of growing labor unrest in the private sector. Even before the strike wave, a number of provincial and municipal governments had raised the legal minimum wage, in some cases as much as 20 percent.

Despite increasing economic inequality, one should recognize that workers in China, including migrants in the capitalist sector, have generally experienced a substantial improvement in living standards during the decades of the "reform" era. It is also true that the closing and privatizing of many state-owned enterprises over the years have produced severe economic uncertainty for workers who have seen their previously guaranteed social benefits cut and who lack the education and skills to find new work. But with the export sector booming, between 2004 and 2009 the average real monthly wage of migrant workers increased by more than 40 percent. That workers at Honda used cell phones and the Internet to coordinate strikes at different plants indicates that they have access to modern technology—a world away from the experience of their parents, not to speak of their grandparents on the rural communes of the Mao era.

Because the strikes were in capitalist enterprises, they did not constitute the kind of direct challenge to the ruling bureaucracy that strikes or other labor protests in strategic sectors of the statified economy, such as steel production, oil extraction and the railway system would pose. To a certain extent, the CCP regime could posture as a paternalistic defender of Chinese workers against unbridled exploitation by Japanese, Korean and offshore Chinese capitalists. In mid June, China's premier Wen Jiabao intoned that "the government and all sectors of society should treat migrant workers as they would their own children."

The fact that Honda is a Japanese company was likely an important factor in the authorities' initial tolerance for the strike and the extensive domestic media coverage. The Beijing Stalinist leaders seek popular legitimacy by, above all, appealing to Chinese nationalism, evoking the historical memory of the country's semicolonial subjugation prior to the 1949 Revolution. An important source of the CCP's historical authority was its mobilization of the peasant masses in resisting the Japanese imperialists' invasion and occupation of China in the 1930s-'40s. Even today Japan, rather than the United States, is the main target of both popular and officially sponsored Chinese nationalism.

On the other side of the Sea of Japan, the leading bourgeois newspaper *Nikkei* complained that "in the strike at the Honda-supplier, the authorities took a neutral stance from beginning to end." In this respect, the strikes in China contrast sharply with the bloody state repression of labor struggles against Japanese companies in the semicolonial countries of Southeast Asia. For example, soldiers and police recently attacked workers at a Toshiba plant in Indonesia. In the Philippines, a union leader at the Japanese company Takata was murdered in early June in the course of a struggle for union recognition.

The strikes at the Chinese Honda and Toyota factories underscore the need for unity between the proletariats of China and Japan—a prospect that is completely outside the nationalist worldview of China's Stalinist misrulers. Had the Japanese workers at these two auto giants expressed support for their Chinese class brothers, this would have strengthened their bargaining power and undercut the anti-Japanese nationalism promoted by the Beijing regime.

At the same time, the unity between different strata of workers—trainees from technical schools and full-time employees—displayed during the Foshan Honda strike could provide a positive and powerful example for the Japanese labor movement, with its hierarchical division between the permanent employees of the big corporations and the large number of temporary workers. This division poses directly the need for a political struggle against the lackeys of the bourgeoisie in the top leadership of the unions in Japan. For example, the most powerful unions in strategic industries such as auto and electronics allow only full-time employees to join.

AP

Street scene in Guangzhou shows new generation of China's migrant workers.

The workers' suicides at Foxconn and strikes at a number of other Taiwanese-owned enterprises point to the substantial presence of offshore Chinese capital in the mainland industrial economy. The island statelet of Taiwan, where the bulk of Chiang Kai-shek's defeated forces fled in the late 1940s, is the base of the main body of the Chinese big bourgeoisie. Unlike mainland capitalist entrepreneurs, the bourgeoisie on Taiwan possesses its own counterrevolutionary political organizations. Moreover, the Taiwan-based bourgeoisie operates under the direct military protection of American imperialism.

The Beijing Stalinists have long promoted reunification with Taiwan under the formula, "one country, two systems," the same formula used to incorporate the capitalist enclave of Hong Kong (a former British colony) in 1997. The incorporation of Taiwan into the People's Republic under that formula is not on the immediate historical agenda. But should such a development take place, it would greatly strengthen the social forces of capitalist restoration, much more so than in the case of Hong Kong. Opposing the Stalinists' efforts to accommodate the Taiwan-based Chinese bourgeoisie, we stand for ***revolutionary reunification***: proletarian political revolution on the mainland and proletarian socialist revolution in Taiwan resulting in the expropriation of the bourgeoisie.

A Tight Labor Market and a New Proletarian Generation

The strike wave that began in the spring took place in the capitalist sector of China's economy. However, favorable conditions for these workers' struggles have been the result in good part of the workings of the core collectivized sector of the economy. When the world capitalist market tanked in the fall of 2008, an estimated 20 million workers were laid off from the export-producing factories in coastal China. Most returned to the rural villages.

One of the main effects of the government's stimulus program has been a substantial expansion of employment opportunities in the country's interior. As export production revived, beginning last summer, the inflow of migrants seeking work in coastal China was less than in the past. Glenn Maguire, Asia chief economist for the French bank Société Générale, observed that this development "suggests that the stimulus packages have been incredibly successful at creating jobs" (Reuters, 1 June). A survey by the ministry of labor estimated that in the Pearl River Delta manufacturing center in Guangdong, job vacancies exceeded applicants by 9 percent in the first quarter of the year. The tight labor market has increased the bargaining power of workers at the individual and the collective level. An executive at a Guangdong-based electronics company noted the changed situation: "When you fined workers nobody would dare to object because if you said anything you were out. But now every time a certain number of workers oppose some management move, my company will adjust it" (*Financial Times*, 4 June).

In addition to conjunctural factors, the long-term demographic trend is beginning to impact the labor market. For the past several decades, the CCP regime, seeking to curb population growth, has limited urban families to one child and rural families to two. As a consequence, the population between the ages of 15 and 24—the pool from which almost all migrant workers are drawn—has remained basically unchanged for the past five years and is projected to fall by almost 30 percent over the next ten years. Many bourgeois commentators foresee the beginning of the end of "cheap labor" in China.

But it is not only objective conjunctural and demographic factors that underlie the increased assertiveness and social power of China's workers. The strike wave signals the entry of a new proletarian generation onto the social scene, one whose outlook and attitudes differ significantly from those of their parents.

The young peasant men and women who flooded into the cities in the 1980s and '90s came from very poor, economi-

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cally primitive conditions. Working in a factory or construction site, however harsh the conditions, was the only way they could improve their lives. For most of them, the goal was to save enough money so that they could return to their native villages and build new homes, buy equipment for their family farms or open small businesses.

The present generation of migrants has come of age in a society that is far more developed, even in the countryside, but also much more unequal. Their aspirations and expectations are correspondingly different. In response to a survey of 5,000 second-generation migrant workers conducted by the General Labor Union in the Guangdong city of Shenzhen, almost all said that they were unwilling to return to their home villages and become farmers. Cha Jinhua, described as a Guangdong-based labor activist, explained: "We're different from our parents' generation. Their wishes were simple—earn some money and return to their home towns. We want to stay in the cities and enjoy our lives here. But we demand respect" (*Financial Times*, 1 June).

However, the aspirations of young migrant workers to build good lives for themselves in the cities directly confront the legally based household registration or *hukou* system. Workers as well as members of the petty bourgeoisie who have an urban household registration have social benefits that are denied to those with a rural *hukou*. And the latter includes the grown children of migrants who, while born in the cities, are registered as members of a rural household. Holders of an urban *hukou* have priority for employment in state-owned enterprises, which generally provide much better social benefits, such as subsidized housing, and greater job security. In general, migrants pay more for inferior medical care and public schooling for their children. Furthermore, as we observed in "Women Workers and the Contradictions of China Today" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 61, Spring 2009):

> "The migrant population is itself divided between those who have legal status and those who do not. Almost all migrant workers in factories and other major enterprises like Wal-Mart have temporary urban residency permits. However, there are millions of 'undocumented' migrants—no one knows exactly how many—who eke out an existence as casual laborers, housemaids and nannies, street vendors and the like."

We have long called for the abolition of the *hukou* system and for migrants to have the same rights and access to jobs as legally registered urban residents. In championing the rights of migrant workers, a class-struggle labor leadership would help unite the struggles of workers in state-owned industries against bureaucratic mismanagement and cuts in benefits with those of workers exploited in capitalist enterprises.

Labor Struggles in Guangdong: Yesterday and Today

The parents and older brothers and sisters of the workers involved in the recent strike wave also fought for a better life in the capitalist-owned factories and construction sites of coastal China. And there are important elements of continuity as well as differences across the generational divide.

A few years ago, Ching Kwan Lee, an academic of leftist sympathies, published a book based on her fieldwork in two very different regions of China in the early 2000s: *Against the Law: Labor Protests in China's Rustbelt and Sunbelt* (University of California Press [2007]). The "rustbelt" in the subtitle is the northeastern province of Liaoning, which suffered economic devastation and mass unemployment when many large SOEs were downsized and smaller ones were privatized or closed outright in the late 1990s. The "sunbelt" refers to Guangdong.

In regard to the latter region, Lee emphasized the importance of labor laws and their *non*-enforcement in conditioning workers' struggles. Almost all strikes and other industrial actions were preceded by complaints to local officials that the employer had violated the law with respect to wages (unpaid or below the legal minimum), overtime, social benefits or safety. She cited a case where complaints to the Labor Bureau by a small number of workers' representatives were repeatedly ignored. Only when all of the workers in the factory went on strike did the Bureau intervene to arrange mediation.

Lee concluded that "migrant workers, feeling deprived of the socialist social contract available to state-owned enterprise workers, see the Labor Law as the only institutional resource protecting their interests vis-à-vis powerful employers and local officials." One woman worker told her: "Once we saw the terms of the Labor Law, we realized that what we thought of as bitterness and bad luck were actually violations of our legal rights and interests." A construction worker made similar comments in explaining the struggle against an employer who had forged workers' signatures on labor contracts and denied workers access to the contracts' terms:

> "For two weeks, we had only one meal each day and we read everything on the Labor Law and labor dispute arbitration in the bookstore. Before this, we had no idea what the law said about us migrant workers. For many years, we had only heard about the labor contract, but we did not press the company hard enough when they refused to give us a copy.... Since we started this struggle with the company, many workers have begun to read newspapers. Some even cut out labor dispute stories for circulation in the dormitory."

The prevailing attitude among workers was that the labor laws, if enforced, would substantially improve their conditions of life. But they were *not* enforced by local officials, many of whom were corrupt and openly colluded with the employers. A lawyer specializing in getting compensation for workers injured on the job recounted that a judge once told him: "Lawyer Zhou, if the court adheres to all the laws and regulations of the provincial government, all these factories would move elsewhere and the local economy would collapse. Who would be responsible then? You?"

To what extent is Lee's observation from the early 2000s, that knowledge of the labor laws encourages and shapes workers' struggles, applicable to the recent strike wave? From afar one cannot give a definitive answer. However, in the judgment of most observers, an important contributing factor to the upsurge of labor militancy was the new labor law adopted in 2008, which strengthened workers' formal rights vis-à-vis the employer. Obviously, the CCP leadership did not intend this legislation to be an incitement for workers to go on strike. Rather, it sought to pressure capitalist firms to ameliorate the conditions of exploitation so as to minimize labor unrest.

The relation between workers' struggles and the labor laws is contradictory. Workers have been emboldened to undertake strikes and other actions in defense of their legally recognized rights. At the same time, a belief that the laws are good but local officials are bad can foster illusions in the benevolent nature of the central government/party leadership. China's premier likes to be called "Uncle Wen," as he cultivates an avuncular image. It serves political stability if the workers' anger is directed at low-level functionaries who can easily be sacrificed to assuage popular sentiment.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

New Orleans...

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and schools. To enforce this program, the New Orleans Police Department did what it always does—and then some—by terrorizing the black population. And the attacks on the black poor went hand in hand with a concerted effort to bust the city's unions.

One of Nagin's first acts after the floodwaters were drained in 2005 was to fire all 8,000 public school employees. Unionized teachers, the vast majority of them black, were thrown on the scrap heap in an all-out drive to replace public schools with charter schools. Today, 70 percent of schools in New Orleans are charter schools, a far higher rate than any other city in the country. Obama's education secretary Arne Duncan—the spearhead of the administration's attacks on public schools and teachers unions—ghoulishly crowed: "The best thing that happened to the education system in New Orleans was Hurricane Katrina." Also under the ax is the public University of New Orleans, where students demonstrated on September 1 against deep budget cuts. Students were viciously attacked by cops, who arrested two protesters on felony charges. We demand: Drop the charges against the protesters!

The capitalists took the "opportunity" created by Katrina to carry out longstanding plans to gut public housing in New Orleans, even though much of it was little damaged by the flooding. In 2008, local and federal housing officials teamed up to demolish four of the city's largest public housing complexes, destroying more than 3,000 apartments that had been occupied before Katrina. Billionaire investor Warren Buffett was given the green light to build a for-profit housing development on the site of the former St. Bernard projects. Today, the city has a deliberately manufactured shortage of low-income housing, with a waiting list of 28,000 tenants for subsidized housing. On top of that, a federal judge ruled last month that a government program of financial aid for property owners to rebuild homes damaged by the hurricane had systematically discriminated against black people.

Conditions in the largely black Lower Ninth Ward, where more than three-quarters of the pre-storm population have not returned, were recently described by journalist Brendan McCarthy in a gut-wrenching report in the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* (29 August): "There is one sentiment shared among all: the neighborhood has been forgotten.... Snakes, stray dogs, rabbits, roosters, rats and cats roam the streets. The mosquitoes are ferocious. The neighborhood has no supermarket, no police substation, no pharmacy, no doctor." Only one of the five schools in the area has reopened; the nearest hospital is on the other side of town. One dismayed resident told McCarthy: "There'll probably be big condos here in five years."

Meanwhile, the notorious New Orleans cops have been so flagrantly kill-crazy since Hurricane Katrina that newly elected mayor Mitch Landrieu was compelled to call on Obama's Justice Department "to conduct a full review of the city's Police Department" (*New York Times*, 26 August). The feds are investigating eight criminal cases involving accusations of "police misconduct." These include the notorious shooting of six people at the Danziger Bridge, six days after the hurricane, two of whom were killed (see "Homicidal New Orleans Cops," *WV* No. 959, 21 May). Two others are known to have been shot and killed by the NOPD, while at least eleven black men were hunted down by white "militia" patrolling the Algiers district with the support of the cops. These are among the "official" stories; it is unknown how many other atrocities—by cops or by racist white vigilantes—will come to light, if they ever will.

Whatever the outcome of these investigations, the purpose of such "reviews" is to refurbish the credentials of the forces of "law and order" and make them more effective in repressing the workers and the oppressed. Landrieu, and the local bourgeoisie he represents, simply want to make New Orleans "safe" for more capital investment and the lucrative tourist trade. New Orleans chief of police Ronal Serpas chimed in that a Justice Department investigation was "exactly what needed to happen."

The anger of black workers and others in the face of the atrocities perpetrated by the bourgeoisie in New Orleans needs a *class* expression—i.e., integrated proletarian struggle against the racist capitalist order. In the aftermath of Katrina, we raised a series of demands that the unions should fight for, such as: a massive program of federally funded public works to rebuild New Orleans and the rest of the devastated Gulf Coast; union jobs at union wage scales; workers committees that could veto shoddy designs and construction before they endangered more lives. Such a campaign could have been an important step in the long-needed unionization of the South and, more generally, the revival of the declining union movement. But to unleash labor's social power requires a fight to replace the labor bureaucracy with a class-struggle leadership that breaks the unions' political ties to the capitalist state and bourgeois parties.

The workings of the capitalist economy have hit the New Orleans area hard. In the mid 1970s, the New Orleans ILA longshoremen's union had some 7,000 members, with warehouses and food-processing plants along the waterfront providing many other union jobs. Today the ILA, once the center of labor and black power in the city, has fewer than 400 members. Earlier this year, the head of the Port of New Orleans crowed that port labor is now only half unionized. This summer, the bosses at Avondale Shipyard on the edge of New Orleans announced the closing of the facility, the largest manufacturing employer in Louisiana. This threatens to eliminate a multiracial workforce of 5,000 unionized workers, along with many jobs at smaller facilities supporting the shipyard.

What has happened in New Orleans is a stark indictment of the barbarous, irrational capitalist system and its insatiable drive for profit. The brutal racial oppression that found such naked expression at the time of Hurricane Katrina is fundamental to American capitalism and will not be eliminated short of the revolutionary overturn of that system. As we wrote in "New Orleans: Racist Atrocity":

> "The situation cries out for a socialist planned economy, in which natural resources and the technological and productive forces of society would be marshaled *on behalf of human needs*, not profit. What is urgently required is to build a workers party that can lead a workers revolution to rip power from the hands of the capitalist class and its political agents, right-wing Republican and liberal Democrat alike." ■

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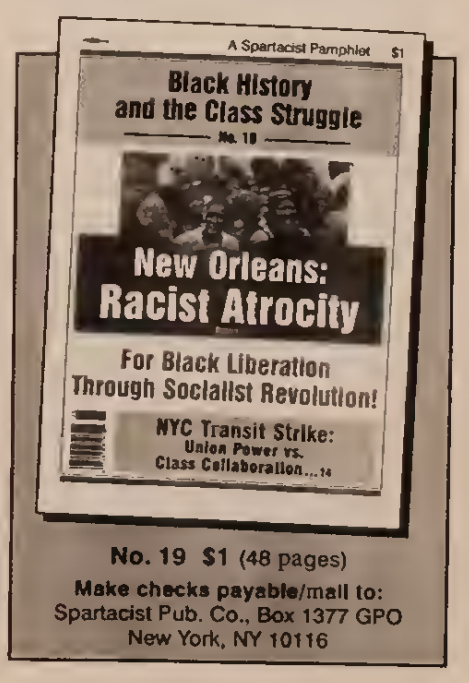

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South Africa...

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masses in sweeping away capitalist rule and paving the road to a socialist federation of Southern Africa. Mining companies, banks and other corporations that are the core of South Africa's economy also dominate countries to the north, including desperately poor Mozambique, where skyrocketing prices for bread and electricity have sparked widespread protests, which were met with murderous state repression last week. In South Africa, immigrants from Mozambique, Zimbabwe and other countries have been the target of mob violence and state repression. There is a renewed threat of mass deportations as the South African government moves to lift a special dispensation for Zimbabweans. It is absolutely essential for the trade unions to defend foreign workers, an elementary act of class solidarity.

We reprint below a leaflet, slightly edited, on the public workers strike issued by Spartacist South Africa on September 2.

* * *

2 September 2010—For more than two weeks, a strike by some one million public sector workers has rocked the country. Nurses, teachers and others have shut down big sections of public services, taking militant action and braving severe state repression to make sure the strike is solid. Under the leadership of the Congress of South African Trade Unions and the Independent Labour Caucus, the strikers are demanding an 8.6 percent wage increase backdated to 1 April, a housing allowance of R1000 per month, and a one-year contract. These demands are a matter of survival for many workers. With real unemployment over 35 percent and almost 1 million jobs lost since the start of 2009, many public workers support up to ten other family members from their meagre salaries.

Thembinkosi Dwayisa

Partners in bourgeois Tripartite Alliance: ANC president Jacob Zuma (left), SACP general secretary Blade Nzimande, COSATU general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi.

The public sector strike coincides with strikes by SAMWU [South African Municipal Workers Union] in the water department and NUMSA in tyre and rubber manufacturing, which both are demanding living wages. The background for the strike's militancy is widespread anger at the base of society over the deepening inequality and desperate conditions of the oppressed black majority which continue to define neo-apartheid capitalism sixteen years after the government of the African National Congress and its Tripartite Alliance partners, the South African Communist Party and COSATU, came to power promising a "better life for all."

Beginning a month after the finish of the soccer World Cup, the strike punctures the bourgeois nationalist hype of a "rainbow nation" with "unity" between the exploiters and exploited. The bosses and their government are particularly outraged about this, ranting against the unions for damaging the "image" of the country and supposedly frightening off imperialist investment.

Before the strike, the union leaders bent over backwards to prevent an embarrassment of the Alliance government under Zuma, who the COSATU bureaucracy falsely promoted as a friend of workers and the poor. First they reached an agreement that guaranteed no strikes during the World Cup. After that, COSATU general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi admitted that the COSATU leadership was willing to settle, and COSATU unions even scabbed on a two-day strike by the Public Servants Association. ***For industrial unions—one industry one union! Picket lines mean don't cross!***

But the anger of their membership forced the hand of the COSATU tops, who are obviously reluctant to mobilise the full power of their base because they are a component part of the capitalist Alliance government. COSATU called a secondary strike by all its affiliate unions on 2 September, a call which was also supported by the metalworkers union affiliated to the National Council of Trade Unions. The leadership then postponed it and tried to end the strike when a new offer was tabled by the government. But the membership of the largest COSATU unions has defiantly rejected the offer and it looks like the strike will continue.

Including over 300,000 members of the powerful National Union of Mineworkers and other COSATU unions in the private sector, a secondary strike would hit the heart of the economy and bring the capitalists' profits to a grinding halt. This would be a powerful display of labour solidarity, with resonance beyond the country's borders with workers internationally facing huge attacks as the capitalists seek to make them pay for the economic crisis. ***Victory to the public sector strike!***

As a hand-made placard by one striker put it in a play on [state-owned broadcaster] SABC's World Cup slogan, "Feel It—It's War." This is a *class war*, and the bosses are mobilising all the forces of their class rule against the strike. The army has been deployed to the hospitals for scab-herding and intimidating the unions; police have regularly and brutally attacked picket lines with water cannons and shot strikers with rubber bullets; in the first two weeks of the strike, over 180 workers were arrested and tried in summary fashion by "dedicated courts" modelled on those set up during the World Cup. Drop all charges against striking workers and release them now! The unions must demand: ***No reprisals against the strikers!***

The strike demonstrates again the Marxist understanding that the core of the state—the cops, the courts, prisons and army—is an armed apparatus that the ruling class uses to maintain power. However, the COSATU and other union bureaucrats as well as the SACP leadership treacherously treat the cops as a bona fide component of the workers movement. After more than 100 strikers were arrested on 23 August, Vavi urged members of the cop "unions" Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU) and the South African Policing Union "not to allow the employer to use them to crush the strike" (*The Southern Times*, 27 August). But this is exactly the job of the capitalist police, who are hired thugs of the bosses! We demand: ***Police, security, prison and border guards—out of the unions!***

Whether they're black or white, the cops are integral to enforcing the oppression of the black majority which remains at the foundation of South African capitalism under neo-apartheid. The same cops that attack the picket lines are regularly used to repress service delivery protests by the unemployed and poor in the townships, and for raids, harassment and deportation—these attacks also fuel anti-immigrant mob violence. The power of the unions must be mobilised in defence against this state terror. ***For full citizenship rights for all immigrants!***

Along with state repression, the government and bourgeois media are conducting a massive propaganda campaign to break the strike. In an attempt to whip up public anger against the strike, they accuse striking nurses of "endangering lives" and attack striking teachers for disrupting the education of learners. This is cynical hypocrisy from a government responsible for the massive under-funding of the public health system which has resulted lately in a rash of infant mortalities because of lack of sterilisation and other basics, and which has exacerbated the devastating impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic which kills up to a thousand people a day. Staffing and supply shortages have regularly disrupted treatment—in 2007, only 34 percent of those requiring ARVs [antiretroviral drugs] actually received them, and last year the public sector ARV programme had a 1 billion rand shortfall. Before that, the notorious denialism of President Thabo Mbeki (with Zuma as his Deputy) caused the needless deaths of an estimated 300,000-plus people. The public schools are so under-funded that learners still have to attend classes under trees.

It's notable that despite the media campaign, the strike remains widely popular among working people and the poor, who are the ones hit the hardest by the disruption of public services. What's urgently needed is a class-struggle fight for the burning demands of the masses which can unite all the oppressed behind the social power of the unions: For free ARVs for all who need them, *now*! For free, quality health care for all and free education with a living stipend through to university!

Against the demagogy which is regularly used by ANC leaders to whip up anti-union sentiment among the unemployed, labour must fight to unite the employed and unemployed in mutual solidarity by fighting for *jobs for all* by dividing the available work among all with no loss in pay. These and other urgent necessities like decent, affordable housing require a fight against the capitalist system which perpetuates poverty and misery, for a black-centred workers government to expropriate the capitalists and run society in the interests of the majority.

The central political obstacle to such a struggle is the working class's subordination to the capitalist class through the SACP/COSATU alliance with the bourgeois nationalist ANC. The Tripartite Alliance is a nationalist popular front—the South African variant of a governmental coalition binding a reformist workers party to the bourgeoisie. The SACP and COSATU tops perpetuate the illusion that the interests of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie can be expressed by a common programme, like the "national democratic revolution." In fact, the class interests of the exploited are irreconcilably counterposed to those of their exploiters. Class divisions are hugely distorted by the lens of racial colour in South Africa, which the SACP and COSATU tops use to openly and shamelessly advance their popular-front alliance with the ANC.

Since it first took office in 1994 following the demise of racist apartheid rule, this government has upheld the neo-apartheid capitalist order by breaking strikes and enforcing austerity. The SACP and COSATU leaderships' adherence to the Alliance means betraying the interests of the workers and oppressed. When nurses walked out in 1995 to demand better pay and working conditions, a number of SACP/COSATU bureaucrats branded their action a "counterrevolutionary strike." As Safety and Security Minister in 2007, leading SACPer Charles Nqakula set the army and cops against striking COSATU public employees. More recently the COSATU tops supported government strikebreaking against the wildcat strikes by doctors at public hospitals in May 2009, one of the first acts by the newly elected government under Zuma.

AP

Johannesburg, August 19: SADTU teachers union member wounded by rubber bullets fired by cops at strikers.

Today, while mouthing support for the strike demands as "legitimate," a 22 August statement by the SACP trashed the strike and joined in slandering union militants as "violent," chiming in with the bourgeois lies painting the strikers as responsible for the wretched conditions in public health care and education. In marked contrast to its denunciations of the striking workers, the same statement politely calls "on our comrades in the police and other law enforcement agencies to conduct themselves with maximum restraint"! This has caused anger among the SACP base and union militants, with some expressing worry that with SACP leaders occupying such a prominent place in Zuma's government they are being co-opted. The task of forging a revolutionary party in South Africa requires breaking the working class base of the SACP from its pro-capitalist programme and leadership.

It's necessary to understand that the betrayals of the SACP leadership are not an aberration but flow fundamentally from the reformist program of the SACP based on the illusion that the capitalist state can be somehow "transformed" to serve the interests of workers and the oppressed. In reality, this always means taking responsibility for administering the state machinery of capitalist repression and subordinating working class interests to their exploiters, as shown by the appeal in the same 22 August statement: "Above all, we call on all of our formations not to play into a right-wing neo-liberal agenda that seeks to break the organic and strategic unity between Alliance partners, between organised workers and wider popular forces, and between unions and our democratic state."

Recently, a number of COSATU leaders have postured as more critical of Zuma,

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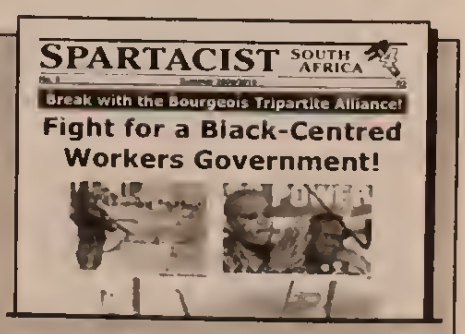

In South Africa:
Spartacist, PostNet Suite 248
Private Bag X2226
Johannesburg 2000

NYPD Kills...

(continued from page 12)

racist media campaign included descriptions of his "profanity" and use of "rap lyrics" on Twitter to portray him as a gang member. Cops raided the two men's homes in search of "evidence," as if anything could justify pouring dozens of bullets into them. The bourgeois press gleefully referred to this *one-sided*, all-out assault as a "Wild West-style shoot-out." The *New York Post* ran a headline on August 20 that read: "Punk Had 21 Shots Coming: Cops." The cops and their media vultures made their message clear: if you are young and black or Latino, it's always open season. In fact, the cops' barrage of bullets was intended to prevent Alvarez from surviving to tell of the hellish nightmare. "They took my grandson. It's unjustified," cried Myrna Soto. Indeed it is, as is every racist cop shooting in this country.

The killing of Soto and attempted killing of Alvarez are by no means an aberration. We will not forget Sean Bell, also killed in a hail of 50 cop bullets, and Amadou Diallo, shot at 41 times and killed by the police, as well as countless other victims of police terror. These killings are part and parcel of the police violence that is systematically employed against the black and Latino populations under racist American capitalism, where young men and women are treated as criminals under the guise of the "war on drugs" and "war on crime." Racist state repression has only intensified under the bipartisan "war on terror," which is camouflage for the imperialist rulers to ride roughshod from Iraq to Afghanistan and wage war at home against immigrants, black people and the rights of the population as a whole. Astounding numbers of black youth are unemployed or incarcerated in prison hellholes. Black oppression, deriving from the legacy of chattel slavery, is the cornerstone of American capitalism. We fight to win the entire working class, including white workers and Latino and other immigrants, to the fight for black liberation, which is strategic to the American revolution.

The election of Barack Obama was celebrated by many in Harlem who believed that it would mean an easing of racial oppression and economic suffering. The truth is that the only thing that has changed with Obama is the name of the overseer in the White House. The Obama administration and the Democratic Party have done nothing to advance the position of working people because that is not their job. Their job is to serve the financial interests of the bourgeoisie, which benefits from the oppression of workers, blacks, Latinos and immigrants. While cops rampage through the streets of decaying urban centers, there has also been increasing repression of immigrants, through deportations, beefing up border control and the passage of the Arizona anti-immigrant pass law. Obama opposes this apartheid-style law only in order to replace it with a more palatable federal version. Black rights and immigrant rights go forward together or backward separately. Black workers and the entire working class must stand for *full citizenship rights for all immigronts* and mobilize against racist and chauvinist anti-immigrant attacks. *An injury to one is on injury to oll!*

WV Photo

NYC, April 2008: Protesters at Queens County Courthouse denounce acquittal of cops who killed Sean Bell in hail of 50 bullets on his wedding day.

In response to the racist cop shooting in Harlem there should have been massive labor-centered protests on the streets to unite the social power of the working class with the anger of the ghetto and barrio masses. New York City is a union town with a multiracial working class—black, white, Latino, Asian and immigrants from around the world. Transit workers, city and hospital workers have the social power to bring the financial capital of U.S. imperialism to a screeching halt. In 2005, striking transit workers gave the city a taste of labor power by crippling the city for three days, for which NYC mayor Michael Bloomberg called them "thugs." In the end, the transit workers were sold out by their pro-Democratic Party leadership. To unleash the tremendous social power of labor requires a political struggle within the unions to build a class-struggle leadership by fighting to oust the pro-capitalist labor misleaders who subordinate the interests of working people to the bosses' capitalist parties, Democratic and Republican alike.

Anger over the cops' brutal shooting has been derailed primarily by former FBI fink and black Democratic Party hustler Al Sharpton. Sharpton and his National Action Network immediately organized an "Anti-Violence Summit." Outraged residents of Harlem had to stomach Sharpton's whitewash that the shooting was just "some overreaction" and his diatribes about people needing to "talk and discuss how we can come to terms with violence" and how he did not fight "to give you the right to be a hoodlum and a thug." Sharpton sure is fighting like hell—on behalf of the racist hoodlums and thugs of the NYPD, who also spoke at this meeting! These "anti-violence" campaigns steer the blame for racist oppression away from the bourgeois state and put the onus on the victims. Such campaigns are also coupled with calls for gun control, which would mean the monopolization of guns in the hands of the racist capitalist state.

The cops are the armed fist of the ruling class, whose profits are derived from the exploitation of labor and the racist oppression of blacks, Latinos, immigrants and all minorities. Their purpose is to safeguard the bosses' profit system through brute force: breaking strikes, rounding up ghetto and barrio youth, repressing social protest. The cops can't be reformed—not with more black and Latino cops, not with civilian review board "watchdogs," not with "community control" schemes. There will be no end to police brutality without getting rid of the capitalist state—the entire apparatus of cops, prisons, courts and armies—through workers revolution. What is needed is to mobilize the power of the multiracial working class in struggle against the capitalist exploiters and their state terror, in defense of immigrants and people living in the ghettos and indeed against the whole capitalist system.

Harlem and other urban centers in the U.S. are plagued with the likes of Sharpton and occasionally "radical" phrasemongering Democrats like NYC City Councilman Charles Barron. The role of these so-called "leaders" is to contain social unrest within bounds safe for the racist capitalist rulers. A few New York black and Latino Democrats, including Barron, have launched a "Freedom Party" that is not a political break with the capitalist Democrats; it was formed only to protest against the exclusion of "blacks and Latinos from the State's (and City's) power positions." In fact, numerous black Democrats have been employed as governors (including current NY governor David Paterson), mayors and police chiefs of major cities in this country. Their job has been to keep working and black people down, to oversee cop terror and administer the slashing of social programs. Their value to the racist rulers is embodied in the statement by black former New York City mayor David Dinkins: "They'll take it from me."

The fight for justice for the countless victims of cop terror demands the independent mobilization of the working class and the oppressed against the Democratic and Republican parties of capital. The Spartacist League fights to forge the revolutionary workers party that is essential to lead the multiracial proletariat in the overturn of the murderous capitalist system. Nothing short of a socialist revolution that smashes the capitalist state machinery and replaces it with a workers state—where those who labor rule—can end capitalist class rule, racist oppression and cop terror once and for all.■

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reacting to the anger and pressure from their membership with some leaders threatening that Zuma could be removed the same way that Mbeki was. Speaking at a rally of NUMSA workers on 28 August, Vavi declared, "We will not make a mistake again of voting into power our political butchers" (*Business Day*, 30 August)—pretty cynical when you think of how prominent Vavi was in selling Zuma to the workers. But despite some left-sounding rhetoric, the COSATU bureaucracy's posturing has nothing to do with a policy of class independence of the proletariat from bourgeois nationalism. Rather, what they're talking about is using the working class as a *pressure* on the ANC to adopt policies and leaders which are supposedly "pro-worker." This was expressed by a Western Cape provincial leader of the National Education Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU), addressing a strike rally on 24 August in Cape Town: "Some people say 'phantsi ANC' (away with the ANC), but the problem is not the ANC. The problem is leaders we elect.... We're telling him [Zuma] he must beware" (www.iol.co.za, 25 August).

Worker militants must be broken from bourgeois nationalism of all kinds and won to a revolutionary workers party based on political *opposition* to the ANC. Otherwise it is *guaranteed* that the working class will continue to be misled by the pro-capitalist tops into supporting its "political butchers." As we wrote three years ago in analysing the lessons of the 2007 public sector strike: "The point is not to reform the ANC by futilely searching for a 'pro-worker' alternative to Mbeki. An ANC run by Jacob Zuma would be just as anti-working-class as the current ANC" (see *Spartacist South Africa* No. 5, Spring 2007 [or *WV* No. 895, 6 July 2007]). At the root of the masses' miserable living conditions—mass unemployment, homelessness, poverty, cop violence, hellish "health care"—is a capitalist economic system that continues to be based on superexploited, mainly black labour and white privilege.

Spartacist South Africa fights to forge a Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead the struggle for socialist revolution—*for a black-centred workers government*. This is the only way to open the road to genuine social and national emancipation. Such a government would not be racially exclusive, but would unite the many black tribal and language based groups along with the Coloured and Indian populations while providing ample room and full democratic rights for those whites who would accept a government centred on the black toilers. As part of a socialist federation of Southern Africa, a black-centred workers government would fight to extend revolution to the imperialist centres of the U.S., West Europe and Japan. It will take an international socialist planned economy to lift the urban and rural masses out of poverty and create a classless society of material abundance—the beginning of a communist society. This is the essence of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution.■

Spartacist League/U.S. and Trotskyist League of Canada Forums

Militant Strike Wave in China
The Chinese Tinderbox
Defend the Chinese Deformed Workers State!
For Proletarian Political Revolution to Oust the Bureaucrats!
CHICAGO
Saturday Sept. 11, 5 p.m.
University of Illinois at Chicago
Student Center East
White Oak Room
750 S. Halsted Street
(take Blue Line—UIC Halsted stop)
For more info:
(312) 563-0441
chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!
Labor Must Defend Immigrant and Black Rights
Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!
NEW YORK CITY
Saturday October 9, 5 p.m.
322 W. 48th Street
1st floor
(between 8th and 9th Avenues take A, C or E to 42nd St.)
For more info: (212) 267-1025 • nysl@tiac.net

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!
Down With Harper's War on Women's Rights!
For Free Abortion on Demand!
TORONTO
Saturday Sept. 25, 7 p.m.
OISE (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education)
252 Bloor St. West, Rm. 5170
(at St. George subway)
For more info: (416) 593-4138 • spartcan@on.aibn.com

WORKERS VANGUARD

Five Years After Katrina

New Orleans Racist Hell

Brandon/Times-Picayune

Getty

Left: Days after Hurricane Katrina, Lance Madison was arrested at Danziger Bridge, where cops shot six people, killing two. Right: Five years later, Press Park housing projects, flooded by Katrina, are still rotting away.

The government's response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005 constituted a racist atrocity in which the horrors visited upon the black and poor people of New Orleans exposed the raw reality of race and class in capitalist America. There remains a wellspring of bitterness, especially among the black population, at the recollection of desperate families clinging to the roofs of their homes vainly appealing for aid, of dying victims left without food or water in the sweltering Superdome, of cops and National Guard troops shooting down "looters"—that is, survivors foraging for food. Responsibility for the crimes committed against the population of New Orleans must be placed squarely at the feet of the Democratic and Republican bourgeois politicians—from the Louisiana statehouse to the White House—who oversee the murderous racist capitalist system.

At the time, we wrote in "New Orleans: Racist Atrocity" (*WV* No. 854, 16 September 2005):

> "It is not just that the victims in New Orleans were primarily black and poor, but a spotlight was thrown on the desperate conditions faced by black people across the country. New Orleans has its own peculiarities, including geography. But across the U.S., the mass of black people is forced to live in inner cities that are little more than rotting shells—from Newark and Camden to Detroit and Gary. No jobs, no health care, schools that are little more than prisons. This country's racist rulers see no reason to spend money to maintain a layer of the black population that is increasingly seen as a surplus population."

As a U.S. Senator in 2005, Barack Obama grotesquely declared that "the incompetence" of government officials at the time of Katrina was "color-blind." As president he intones in a speech in New Orleans on the fifth anniversary of the disaster: "We are helping to make New Orleans a place that stands for what we can do in America." What the capitalist rulers did, in the words of then-New Orleans mayor Ray Nagin, was use the hurricane as an opportunity to eliminate the "problems that we had with blight, with crime, and...with the public school system." In plain language, that meant: Get rid of the city's black and poor population by tearing down public housing projects, blocking the rebuilding of neighborhoods like the Lower Ninth Ward and shutting down public hospitals

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Remember Luis Soto! Free Angel Alvarez!

NYPD Kills Again

The following leaflet was issued by the New York Spartacist League on September 2.

On August 8, NYPD cops turned a crowded block in Harlem into a shooting gallery when they surrounded two young Latino men, Luis Soto and Angel Alvarez, and fired 50 bullets from their semiautomatic 9mm handguns. "The police tried to kill me!" Alvarez told his sister from his hospital bed after 23 bullets were removed from his 23-year-old body. They succeeded in killing 21-year-old Soto. A friend of Alvarez, an eyewitness, reported that Alvarez and Soto were fistfighting when a mix of uniformed and plainclothes "police gunned down both of them. Never one time did you hear, 'Freeze,' did you hear, 'Stop.' Not 'NYPD.' Not nothing. All you heard was shots." The racially mixed working-class neighborhoods of Harlem are ordinarily laced with police, and were especially so that night, as there had been a block party earlier in the day. Any festivity is sure to be under massive patrol, to remind you that your every move is under the eye of a baton or a bullet. The cops shot wildly into a crowd of hundreds who were still out for the party. In addition to Alvarez and Soto, three other people were hit. Later that day, in Washington Heights, cops stormed and maced crowds at the Dominican Day Parade.

Fremson/NY Times

Memorial for Luis Soto outside his Bronx apartment building.

After the shooting, the cops' initial accounts of the night were a pack of lies. First it was reported that Alvarez shot Soto and one of the cops at the scene. The reality is that both, along with everyone else shot that night, were hit by cops' bullets. Despite eyewitness accounts to the contrary, the cops claim that Alvarez fired shots from a .38-caliber gun at them. Alvarez's hands were never tested for gunpowder residue. A detective from the NYPD testified in court that he "could not conclude the .38 caliber revolver was actually fired at the time." Critically wounded, Alvarez was initially held on charges that included attempted murder, attempted first-degree assault and various weapons offenses. But when Alvarez appeared in court on August 16, the prosecution had nothing but a charge of weapons possession. Lacking the flimsy strand of evidence needed to get an indictment, prosecutors invoked a rarely used preliminary hearing to keep Alvarez jailed for an additional 45 days without bail, while two grand juries "investigate" how to pin him with attempted murder. The D.A. wants to send him to prison for the rest of his life for the crime of surviving a racist cop street execution. Alvarez should not have spent a day in jail. We defend the basic democratic right to bear arms: No to gun control! *Free Angel Alvarez! Drop the Charges Now!*

Even in death, Luis Soto, the victim of this racist atrocity, is being vilified. A

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For Labor Protests Against Racist Cop Terror!

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 965 — 24 September 2010

Production for Profit: Anarchy and Plunder

Capitalism and Global Warming

The Earth as a whole is without question heating up. According to figures released in July by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, global land and ocean surface temperatures in June were the highest since monitoring began in 1880—the 304th consecutive month above the 20th-century average —while Arctic sea ice melted at a record-breaking pace. Undoubtedly, the heat can be attributed in good part to periodic and natural changes in ocean temperatures and surface air pressure. But there is some other factor at work behind the overall warming trend. A vast majority of climate scientists worldwide, including not only the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) but the national scientific academies of the U.S. and most other countries, identifies that factor as anthropogenic (human-caused) greenhouse gases.

In league with liberal environmentalists, reformist groups like the International Socialist Organization (ISO) have seized on "climate change" to beg the major capitalist powers to join hands in cutting back heat-trapping gases—a goal that significant sections of the ruling capitalist classes have laid claim to. Thus the ISO, Greenpeace et al. put great stock in the climate talks that took place last December in Copenhagen under the sponsorship of the UN, which is, simply, a den of imperialist thieves and their victims.

A new "international climate justice movement" was proclaimed after tens of thousands flocked to the Danish capital, in the main to demand that the world powers agree to curb greenhouse gas emissions and give financial support to Third World countries. The protests included a 100,000-strong demonstration in the middle of the two-week summit, during which heavily armed police squads arrested some 1,000 people. Soon after, thousands of observer delegates, including from such mainstream groups as Greenpeace, were locked out of the conference on its final days.

Reuters

Above: Prince Charles addresses opening session of UN climate change conference in Copenhagen, 15 December 2009. Below: May 2008 protest in Mogadishu, Somalia, was part of outpouring around the globe against sharp rise in food prices engineered by the imperialists.

Getty

For Socialist Revolution!
For an Internationally Planned Economy!

What some had dubbed "Hopenhagen" ended without reaching its stated goals of renewing the emissions-reduction commitments made by industrialized countries that signed on to the 1997 Kyoto Protocol (which the U.S. never ratified) and setting emissions targets for all other countries. This was a predictable outcome. For one thing, the world's capitalist classes are divided internally over this issue. More fundamentally, each capitalist government is charged with protecting its own "national interests." The handful of imperialist countries that dominate the world market are in competition with each other for spheres of exploitation around the world, and have already carried out two devastating world wars in their insatiable drive for profit.

Significant emissions shifts would almost certainly mean substantial economic costs, which few capitalist governments want to incur, especially in the face of a global economic slowdown. The main human activity contributing to the release of heat-trapping gases is also the main activity turning the wheels of the modern economy: the combustion of fossil fuels, such as oil and coal. Given the importance of cheap energy sources, imperialist competition for fossil fuels, especially oil, has played a part in sparking numerous military conflagrations in the last century. Countries with a hand on the oil spigot or access to ample coal reserves have a vested material interest in maintaining the status quo.

The example of the United States, the world's largest per capita emitter of greenhouse gases, is illustrative. Giant American companies like ExxonMobil are central to the global oil cartel, while the core European Union (EU) powers of Germany and France cannot make the same claim. Hence an increase in the world market price of oil not only enriches a dominant sector of corporate America but also increases the energy costs of rival French and German capitalists. For years, the U.S. clashed with the EU over carrying out the Kyoto Protocol, because the nominal emissions caps included in the accord would have affected the U.S. most directly.

Whatever their differences with each other, the imperialists, led by the U.S., have joined together in recent climate talks to pressure China, a bureaucratically deformed workers state, largely in order to throttle its growing industrial strength. After winning EU backing to shift the burden of emissions-reduction agreements onto the more backward countries, the U.S. refused to support any deal at Copenhagen that did not include stringent monitoring of China's emissions. Behind such maneuvers lies the imperialists' strategic goal of smashing the Chinese workers state and once again subjecting the country to untrammeled capitalist exploitation. Against the environmentalists and fake socialists who join in the China-bashing, we stand for the unconditional military defense of China against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution.

For Marxists, addressing the human-derived aspect of global warming is fundamentally not a technical but a social

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China: Labor Struggles in the "Socialist Market Economy"....8

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On Global Warming

Oakland, California
27 July 2009

To the Editors,
Workers Vanguard:

Dear Comrades,

Although it's an ongoing, general question, my interest in it was particularly sparked recently by *Wall Street, Washington Shaft Auto Workers*, WV 938, 2 June 2009: why does the SL consistently avoid applying the Transitional Program to current material conditions? Is this a static, a-historic, dare I say "dead" approach to revolutionary program? Does it involve a refusal to recognize the exploitation of nature as key, along with the exploitation of labor, in the Marxist analysis of capitalism?

The article in question offers a quick review of key points (by quoting from an earlier issue): shorter work week at no loss in pay, extending unemployment benefits, free medical care, and "a massive program of public works at union wages... to create an America that looks like a place that its inhabitants could *survive in*" (emphasis mine). And at the end of the article we read of the need to overthrow capitalism and "build a collectivized, planned economy where production is based on social need, not profit." OK so far, but...

This approach is woefully incomplete: the chief omission is the fact that capitalist exploitation, besides immiserating the masses, is raping the planet to death! You *do* know that greenhouse gases, rising like a "hockey stick" for the past 250 years, now threaten humanity with unparalleled devastation. What does "production based on social need" mean, in today's context, if not—in the transportation sector—restructuring auto and related plants to build electric light rail and energy-efficient buses, as well as electric cars and batteries to run them? And what about free public transportation? ...*And*, electrified intercity high-speed rail, as well as rapid development of energy sources such as windmills, photo voltaics, and geothermal?

How is it that *none* of the above is included in your ideas for "massive public works," but rebuilding dams is? Don't you realize that most modern dams result from domestic financial and IMF/World Bank boondoggles, and are helping to destroy local communities/salmon runs/the environment/the planet? Energy-source development must be part of building a world that people can indeed *survive in*.

Of course, reformist nationalization "solutions" (read: let's help capitalism fix things) won't do it. Our demands work in conjunction with expropriation of relevant corporations, both here and internationally, and the struggle for workers' power. The Transitional Program is the revolutionary alternative to a growing plethora of weak, neo-Malthusian proscriptions, but to be effective, ***it must be applied to today's conditions***.

The SL, despite professing a respect for science, seems oblivious to the fact that, "Labor is ***not the source*** of all wealth. *Nature* is just as much the source of use values (and it is surely of such that material wealth consists) as labor..." (Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Program*) Capitalist-caused global warming is a fact of science, and it threatens civilization with extinction. If this doesn't figure as an important part of a revolutionary program to restructure the world, we're all, well, ***history***.

Comradely,
Chris Kinder

[*All ellipses are the author's.—ed.*]

***WV* replies:**

Our take on global warming, including our Marxist stand against the petty-bourgeois environmentalist movement, is explicated in our article on the subject in this issue. ■

TROTSKY

Communism and Human Liberation

LENIN

In his classic work Anti-Dühring, *one of the most thorough explanations of the Marxist worldview, Friedrich Engels points to increased labor productivity as the prime mover of social evolution. With his inspiring vision of the communist future, Engels shows how the socialization of the means of production will provide the material basis to liberate humanity's all-around creative potential.*

In every society in which production has developed spontaneously—and our present society is of this type—the situation is not that the producers control the means of production, but that the means of production control the producers. In such a society each new lever of production is necessarily transformed into a new means for the subjection of the producers to the means of production....

In making itself the master of all the means of production to use them in accordance with a social plan, society puts an end to the former subjection of men to their own means of production. It goes without saying that society cannot free itself unless every individual is freed. The old mode of production must therefore be revolutionised from top to bottom, and in particular the former division of labour must disappear. Its place must be taken by an organisation of production in which, on the one hand, no individual can throw on the shoulders of others his share in productive labour, this natural condition of human existence; and in which, on the other hand, productive labour, instead of being a means of subjugating men, will become a means of their emancipation, by offering each individual the opportunity to develop all his faculties, physical and mental, in all directions and exercise them to the full—in which, therefore, productive labour will become a pleasure instead of being a burden.

Today this is no longer a fantasy, no longer a pious wish. With the present development of the productive forces, the increase in production that will follow from the very fact of the socialisation of the productive forces, coupled with the abolition of the barriers and disturbances, and of the waste of products and means of production, resulting from the capitalist mode of production, will suffice, with everybody doing his share of work, to reduce the time required for labour to a point which, measured by our present conceptions, will be small indeed.

—Friedrich Engels, *Anti-Dühring* (1878)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is September 21

No. 965 **24 September 2010**

New Orleans Subscriber on Student Protest

Jackson/Times-Picayune

Campus cops pepper-sprayed and arrested students during protest against budget cuts at University of New Orleans, September 1.

Dear Worker's Vanguard,

I am a very recent subscriber to the newspaper; I feel as though it represents my thoughts and standpoints in current events. In fact, the very day after I subscribed, a protest for the continuing budget cuts to our University of New Orleans turned worrisome when two of our very own were handled brutally by the police for occupying a building that is meant to be public and thus unrestricted to students. In addition during the scuffle before two protestors were arrested, one of them was maced and as a result of his pre-existing asthma had to be given medical attention before going into lock-up.

Here in New Orleans, as we commemorated the 5th anniversary of the devastating hurricane Katrina, we are bracing ourselves for even more disaster, namely in the form of massive budget cuts to two vulnerable areas: healthcare and education. As Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal buckles under the pressure of Tea Party approval for his potential 2012 presidential campaign, the working class citizens are paying the price. His repeal of the Stelly Tax in 2008, which lifted taxes on the 2 highest income brackets, has cost the state treasury $358 million a year. The New Orleans Adolescent Hospital was moved across Lake Pontchartrain to the Northshore, making it incredibly difficult for children and their families of lower income to get the help that they need and deserve. Public universities across the state have also come under siege, with two universities on the brink of collapse. The University of New Orleans and Southern University of New Orleans are struggling to stay afloat while the unaffected and disengaged politicians go about their lives in the state capital of Baton Rouge. So what are the implications if these two universities, as well as other public universities, are gone? Higher education is going to be cut off to an insurmountable number of people coming from low to middle classes. The only universities that will remain are private institutions with astronomically high tuition rates. The result of the governor's and his cronies' foolishness will be a commodification of education, available only to the most affluent citizens of the state. Same goes for healthcare, as well. Access to facilities, medical personnel, and pharmaceuticals are cut off to those who are not in the upper income brackets. This semester is the last chance for the University of New Orleans to stop the 35% increase in cuts to our school. In the meantime, students and professors, both from the university as well as alumni and those from other universities, are exchanging and discussing plans for protest, resistance, and intervention. Our situation is closely paralleled by the injustices occurring in Puerto Rico; in both cases abusers of power have cut off money and resources to students, putting our education and futures in jeopardy for the sake of their greed. Although our past efforts have resulted in police brutality and arrests, we will not succumb to pressure and instead work even harder to maintain what rightfully belongs to the people.

Shima M.

***WV* replies:**

We thank Shima M. for her letter and appreciate her outrage over the continuing devastation in New Orleans. The question is, how to fight it?

The oppression and impoverishment that exist under capitalism are not the result of the greed or foolishness of individual politicians, nor is this the province only of right-wing Republicans. From the Louisiana Statehouse on up to the Obama White House, both Democrats and Republicans are pushing through draconian cuts in

Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

Troy Davis Appeal Turned Down

On August 24, Georgia federal judge William T. Moore rejected black inmate Troy Davis' efforts to overturn his death sentence, declaring the substantial evidence of Davis' innocence to be "smoke and mirrors." This decision gives a green light to Georgia's governor to sign a new execution warrant for Davis, who has faced three execution dates so far, coming within 90 minutes of execution in 2008.

Sentenced to death in 1991 for the killing of off-duty Savannah policeman Mark MacPhail, Davis was convicted based on questionable "eyewitness" identifications, dubious accounts that Davis confessed to the killing and testimony coerced by the cops. Seven of the prosecution's nine witnesses have since recanted. The only holdouts are one man who may be the actual killer and another who initially denied being able to identify the shooter only to pin it on Davis at trial two years later. For over a decade, state and federal courts refused to hear evidence that Davis was innocent. Last year, in response to an international campaign that included thousands of protests, with statements from the Pope and former FBI director William Sessions, the U.S. Supreme Court ordered Judge Moore to hold an evidentiary hearing.

Despite the limitations Moore placed on the defense at the two-day hearing, which took place in June, Davis was able to rip the prosecution's case to shreds. Testimony of three witnesses and an affidavit from a fourth repudiated their previous testimony implicating Davis as the shooter. Dorothy Ferrell swore that she never saw who shot MacPhail, stating that since she was on parole at the time of the trial, "I was scared that if I didn't do what the police wanted me to do, then they would try to lock me up again." Kevin McQueen, a jailhouse snitch whose story that Davis confessed to him was a key part of the prosecution's case, testified that his original statement was a lie—revenge for a jailhouse altercation with Davis. Jeffrey Sapp also recanted his trial testimony that Davis confessed to shooting the cop in self-defense, stating that it was a product of police coercion.

Moore's 172-page decision upholds as sacrosanct the stories given by the cops as against the witnesses whom they compelled to give false testimony. Moore sneered that the accounts of police/prosecution coercion, a regular feature of the capitalist justice system, were not credible...because the cops said so! Moore dismissed McQueen's recantation with the Kafkaesque rationale that his original trial testimony—the same testimony that helped send Davis to death row— wasn't credible. Moore also refused to consider the testimony and affidavits of four witnesses that another man, Sylvester "Red" Coles, had confessed to the killing on the grounds that such evidence was merely hearsay unless Coles himself were brought into court to testify. Davis' sister, Martina Correia, noted that the lawyers had a subpoena for Coles but did not have the police powers necessary to serve the subpoena on private property. Yet the judge did not assign any police to serve the subpoena.

Time

Death row prisoner Troy Davis with visiting family members.

While dismissing key evidence that exonerates Davis, Moore sanctimoniously declared that it would violate the Eighth Amendment proscription against cruel and unusual punishment to execute someone who was innocent. The public generally accepts this as a truism. But in fact, Moore's announcement was a precedent for state and federal courts and counter to earlier pronouncements by Supreme Court justices. For example, when the Supreme Court turned down an appeal of death row inmate Leonel Herrera in 1993, Chief Justice William Rehnquist declared that the execution of an innocent man did not violate the Constitution. Here was a clear illustration of the depravity of American capitalist "justice," with all its "democratic" trappings.

As Marxists, we stand for the abolition of the death penalty on principle—for the guilty as well as the innocent—and everywhere, which means the U.S., China, Iran, Japan and all other countries. We do not accord the state the right to determine who lives and who dies. Capital punishment is a barbaric legacy of medieval torture, a system of legal murder that reinforces the brutalization of society in all respects.

In his lengthy ruling, Moore cites the plethora of state laws authorizing DNA testing of evidence, which were adopted after numerous exonerations of death row inmates who had been convicted on the basis of evidence similar to that in the Davis case. For some three decades, state legislatures, Congress and successive occupants of the White House had acted to curtail the ability of death row inmates to challenge their sentences. Their measures drastically limited the ability of those awaiting execution to present to the courts evidence of innocence as well as proof of cop and prosecutorial misconduct. This culminated in the 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act championed by Democratic president Bill Clinton, which gutted the right of *habeas corpus* for such prisoners.

The lynching of black men—by racist mobs and by the august courts—is deeply embedded in this country's history, particularly but by no means exclusively in Southern states like Georgia. In the U.S., capital punishment is rooted in black chattel slavery. It is the lynch rope made legal, with black people making up over 40 percent of the death row population. The death penalty stands at the apex of the machinery of repression wielded by the capitalist rulers to contain the potentially explosive contradictions between the handful of filthy rich at the top and the many at the bottom.

Troy Davis' evidentiary hearing illustrated the smoke and mirrors that is the racist American injustice system. Barely a week goes by without yet another news story about a middle-aged black man proven innocent after decades in prison, released with fanfare about how "the system works," a pat on the back and a bit of "re-entry" money. For the poor, for fighters against racial oppression, for labor militants, there is no justice in the capitalist courts.

Among the innocent on death row is Mumia Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther Party spokesman, a supporter of the Philadelphia MOVE group and an award-winning journalist. Mumia was framed up on false charges of killing Police Officer Daniel Faulkner in 1981 and sentenced to death based on his political views. Court after court has refused to consider the mountain of evidence of Mumia's innocence, including the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, killed Faulkner (see the Partisan Defense Committee pamphlet, *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia Is Innocent!*).

The labor movement and all fighters against racist injustice should join in demanding freedom for Troy Davis and Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolition of the racist death penalty. An injury to one is an injury to all! To put a final halt to the grisly workings of the U.S. rulers' machinery of death—from the judicial guardians of death row to the cops who operate as judge, jury and executioner in gunning down minority youth on the streets—requires sweeping away the racist capitalist system through proletarian socialist revolution.■

social services, speeding up the deportations of immigrants and targeting the unions. Both parties represent the interests of the capitalist ruling class and will always sacrifice the interests of working people and the oppressed in order to maintain the capitalists' class rule and profits.

In order to reorganize society on the basis of human need and, crucially, to put an end to racial oppression that is the heritage of chattel slavery, the working class must overthrow the capitalist system and organize a workers government. This requires the leadership of a revolutionary party that represents the interests of working people and the oppressed. As part of the struggle to build that party, we seek to combat the existing race and class privilege in education. As an elementary act of solidarity, the New York Spartacus Youth Club wrote the district attorney demanding that the charges against the two arrested University of New Orleans student protesters be dropped (see page 5). For the universities, we demand open admissions and no tuition, with a state-paid living stipend so poor and working-class students have equal access to an education. The campuses should be run by those who work and study there. We say: Abolish the administration! For student/teacher/worker control of the universities! We aim to win student activists to the side of the working class and to the struggle for socialist revolution.■

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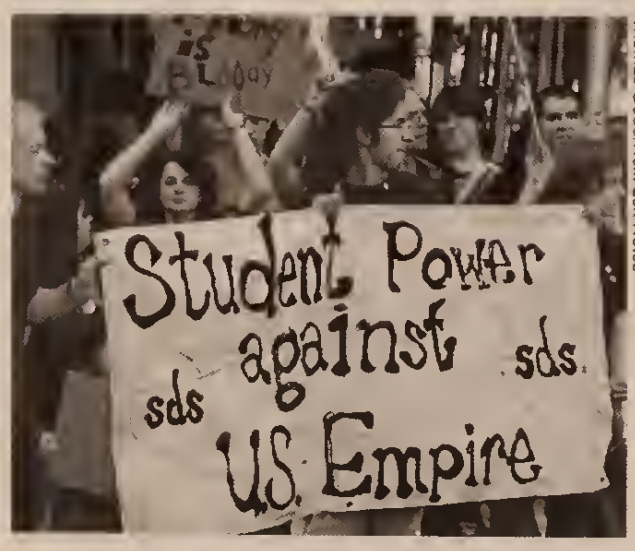
"The Intelligentsia and Socialism"

By Leon Trotsky

FROM THE ARCHIVES OF MARXISM

There is a widespread view among liberals that the greatest obstacle to a just and equal society is ignorance, and the way forward is to win the educated middle classes, in particular and en masse, over to a kinder, gentler way of organizing human affairs. So, for example, armchair radical Noam Chomsky looks to "free and independent" universities where "dominant structures of power and their ideological support will be subjected to challenge and critique" ("Intellectuals and the Responsibilities of Public Life," *Public Anthropology*, 27 May 2001). Proponents of "direct action" embrace a different version of the same idealist outlook, seeking to inspire the passive majority of the population through the actions of a few individuals, just like the advocates of the classic anarchist notion of "propaganda of the deed." In this vein, members of the liberal (pro-Democratic Party) Students for a Democratic Society have occupied buildings and confronted military recruiters in an effort to "appeal to the positive values already commonly held in our society and demonstrate how they are antithetical to our current system" ("Who We Are, What We Are Building," studentsforademocraticsociety.org, 2007).



Thomas Good/Next Left Notes

Students for a Democratic Society at Iraq war protest, New York City, September 2007. SDS Web site touts the role of "student power" in "electing Barack Obama president" ("Student Power for Accessible Education").

An earlier variant of this position was put forward by Max Adler, a prominent Austrian Social Democratic theoretician, in his 1910 pamphlet *Der Sozialismus und die Intellektuellen* (*Socialism and the Intellectuals*). The Social Democratic parties of the time, united in the Second International, were mass organizations of the working class, engaged in significant class struggle and advocating in some fashion the revolutionary overturn of capitalist society. Thus, Adler stood considerably to the left of today's radical liberals. Nevertheless, his views represented a right-wing revision of Marxism that needed to be exposed and refuted—a task taken up by Leon Trotsky later that year.

In answering Adler, Trotsky embarked on a discussion of the role of the intelligentsia in modern capitalist society and the limitations of its consciousness. As he points out, the intellectual "is compelled to sell not his mere labour-power, not just the tension of his muscles, but his entire personality as a human being." Against the view that society is shaped primarily by the struggle of ideas, Trotsky advocated a Marxist, materialist understanding that ideas are ultimately shaped by the struggle between the two fundamental classes of capitalist society—the working class and the capitalists who exploit the workers and profit from their labor.

Trotsky links the views of Adler to those of the Russian Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs), a left-populist party whose orientation to the peasantry was shown to be bankrupt during the 1905 Revolution, when the working class shook tsarist Russia, and in the subsequent wave of repression. In his essay, which was written for the St. Petersburg review *Sovremenny Mir*, Trotsky used veiled language to avoid the tsarist censor. At the time he was writing, Trotsky considered Adler (unlike the SRs) an errant member of a common movement. He shared the view that the road to a communist society was through Social Democratic parties that included both reformist and revolutionary tendencies. But Trotsky's understanding would soon change.

In 1914, with the outbreak of World War I, nearly all the parties of the Second International—including the Social Democratic Workers Party of Austria to which Adler belonged—betrayed Marxist principles by supporting their respective national bourgeoisies in the war and helping pit the working classes in these countries against each other. Trotsky, like V. I. Lenin, Karl Liebknecht and others, understood that revolutionary, internationalist opposition to imperialist war was a cornerstone of the struggle to emancipate the working class.

From the turn of the century onward, Lenin had fought to build the Russian Bolsheviks (initially a faction of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party) as a disciplined organization based on a revolutionary political program. The organizational practice of the Bolsheviks was based on the principle of ***democratic-centralism***, combining freedom of internal debate with discipline and unity in action. Following the betrayal of the Social Democracy in World War I, Lenin concluded that a complete break with reformist and opportunist elements was necessary, not only in Russia but throughout the entire Second International. Trotsky was later won over to Lenin's views and, in 1917, to the Bolshevik Party. After the Russian Revolution of 1917, the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin and Trotsky, set about forging a new, third international.

The Communist Parties of the Third International, modeled after the Bolsheviks, were not "parties of the whole class." Lenin fought for parties that were disciplined, programmatically united organizations of revolutionaries. They were to be built as fusions of the most politically advanced sections of the working class with elements of the radical intelligentsia. This necessarily means opposing the bourgeois distinction between mental and manual labor and challenging the monopoly of petty-bourgeois-derived intellectual skills. As the youth auxiliaries to the revolutionary Marxist Spartacist League, we in the Spartacus Youth Clubs seek to win youth to the perspective of building such a party and to train the next generation of revolutionary fighters.

As for Max Adler and his Austro-Marxist compatriots, while they eventually came to oppose the war, they balked at the Bolshevik Revolution, seeking to occupy a middle ground between revolutionary Marxism and bourgeois reformism before eventually reconciling to the latter. Lenin wrote in 1920 of leading Austro-Marxist Otto Bauer:

> "Before the war he wrote useful and learned books and articles in which he 'theoretically' admitted that the class struggle might attain the acuteness of a civil war. He even had a hand (if I am correctly informed) in drawing up the Basle Manifesto of 1912, which directly foretold a *proletorian revolution* in connection with that very war which actually broke out in 1914.
>
> "But when this proletarian revolution became a reality, the soul of the pedant and philistine got the upper hand, and he grew frightened and *begon to pour* the oil of *reformist phrase-mongering on the troubled waters of the revolution*."
>
> —"A Publicist's Notes"

Imagno

Max Adler

The same year, in *Terrorism and Communism*, Trotsky wrote:

> "While the real teaching of Marx is the theoretical formula of action, of attack, of the development of revolutionary energy, and of the carrying of the class blow to its logical conclusion, the Austrian school was transformed into an academy of passivity and evasiveness, because of a vulgar historical and conservative school, and reduced its work to explaining and justifying, not guiding and overthrowing. It lowered itself to the position of a handmaid to the current demands of parliamentarism and opportunism, replaced dialectic by swindling sophistries, and, in the end, in spite of its great play with ritual revolutionary phraseology, became transformed into the most secure buttress of the capitalist State, together with the altar and throne [the Catholic church and Austrian monarchy] that rose above it."

We reprint below Trotsky's 1910 polemic against Adler, as translated and annotated by Brian Pearce in 1959.

* * *

Ten years ago, or even six or seven years ago, defenders of the Russian subjective school of sociology (the 'Socialist-Revolutionaries') might have successfully utilised for their purpose the latest pamphlet by the Austrian philosopher Max Adler.[1] During the last five or six years, however, we have passed through such a thorough, objective 'school of sociology', and its lessons are written on our bodies in such expressive scars, that the most eloquent apotheosis of the intelligentsia, even coming from the 'Marxist' pen of M. Adler, will not be of any help to Russian subjectivism. On the contrary, the fate of our Russian subjectivists is a most serious argument against Max Adler's allegations and conclusions.

The subject of this pamphlet is the relation between the intelligentsia and socialism. For Adler this is not merely a matter for theoretical analysis but also a matter of conscience. He wants to convince. Adler's pamphlet, based on a speech made to an audience of socialist students, is filled with ardent conviction. The spirit of proselytism permeates this little work, giving a special nuance to ideas which have no claim to novelty. To win the intelligentsia for ***his*** ideals, to conquer their support at whatever cost, this political desire utterly prevails over social analysis in Adler's pamphlet, giving it the particular tone it has, and determining its weaknesses.

What are the intelligentsia? Adler gives this concept, of course, not a moral but a social definition: the intelligentsia are not an order bound together by a historic vow,

but the social stratum which embraces all kinds of 'brain-work' occupations. However hard it may be to draw a line of demarcation between 'manual' and 'brain' work, the general social features of the intelligentsia are clear enough, without any further going into details. The intelligentsia are an entire class—Adler calls them an inter-class group, but essentially there is no difference—existing within the framework of bourgeois society. And for Adler the question is: who or what possesses the better right to the soul of this class? What ideology is inwardly obligatory upon it, as a result of the very nature of its social functions? Adler answers: the ideology of collectivism. That the European intelligentsia, in so far as they are not directly hostile to the ideas of collectivism, at best stand aloof from the life and struggle of the working masses, neither hot nor cold, is a fact to which Adler does not shut his eyes. But it shouldn't be like that, he says, there are no adequate objective grounds for it. Adler decidedly opposes those Marxists who deny the existence of general conditions which could bring about a mass movement of the intelligentsia towards socialism.

'There exist,' he declares in his foreword, 'sufficient factors—though not purely economic ones, but drawn from another sphere—which can influence the entire mass of the intelligentsia, even apart from their proletarian life-situation, as adequate motives for them to join with the socialist workers' movement. All that is needed is that the intelligentsia be made aware of the essential nature of this movement and of their own social position.' What are these factors? 'Since inviolability, and above all, possibility of free development of spiritual interests,' says Adler, 'are among the essential conditions of life for the intelligentsia, theoretical interest is therefore fully on an equality with economic interest where the intelligentsia are concerned. Thus, if the grounds for the intelligentsia joining the socialist movement are to be sought principally outside the economic sphere, this is explicable no less by the specific ideological conditions of existence of mental labour than by the cultural content of socialism' (page 7). Independently of the

there for a very long time; and yet there is no trace, in a single European country, of any mass move by the intelligentsia towards Social-Democracy. Adler sees this, of course, just as well as we do. But he prefers to see the reason for the estrangement of the intelligentsia from the working-class movement in the circumstance that the intelligentsia don't understand socialism. In a certain sense that is true. But in that case what explains this persistent lack of understanding, which exists alongside their understanding many other extremely complicated

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Barricades in Moscow during 1905 Russian Revolution, when the proletariat emerged as a contender for power.

matters? Clearly, it is not the weakness of their theoretical logic, but the power of irrational elements in their class psychology. Adler himself speaks about this in his chapter '*Bürgerliche Schranken des Verständnisses*' (Bourgeois Limits to Understanding), which is one of the best in the pamphlet. But he thinks, he hopes, he is sure—and here the preacher gets the better of the theoretician—that European Social-Democracy will overcome the irrational elements in the mentality of the brain-workers if only it will reconstruct the logic of its relations with them. The intelligentsia don't understand socialism because the latter appears to them from day to day in its routine shape as a political party, one of many, just like the oth-

Schapiro/Black Star

Participants in SNCC's 1964 "Freedom Summer" project. Civil rights movement inspired a generation of student activists.

class nature of the entire movement (after all, it's only a road!), independently of its everyday party-political image (after all, it's only a means!), socialism by its very essence, as a universal social ideal, means the liberation of all forms of mental labour from every sort of socio-historical fetter and limitation. This premise, this vision provides the ideological bridge over which the intelligentsia of Europe can and must pass into the camp of Social-Democracy.[2]

This is Adler's basic standpoint, to developing which his whole pamphlet is devoted. Its radical fault, which at once leaps to the eye, is its *non-historical* nature. The social grounds for the intelligentsia to enter the camp of collectivism which Adler relies on have indeed been

ers. But if the intelligentsia can be shown the true face of socialism, as a world-wide cultural movement, they cannot but recognise in it their best hopes and aspirations. So Adler thinks.

We have come so far without examining whether in fact pure cultural requirements (development of technique, science, art) are in fact more powerful, so far as the intelligentsia as a class are concerned, than the class suggestions radiating from family, school, church and state, or than the voice of material interests. But even if we accept this for the sake of argument, if we agree to see in the intelligentsia above all a corporation of priests of culture who up to now have merely failed to grasp that the socialist break with bourgeois society is the best way to serve the interests of culture, the question then remains in all its force: can West-European Social Democracy offer the intelligentsia, theoretically and morally, anything more convincing or more attractive than what it has offered up to now?

Collectivism has been filling the world with the sound of its struggle for several decades already. Millions of workers have been united during this period in political, trade-union, co-operative, educational and other organisations. A whole class has raised itself from the depths of life and forced its way into the holy of holies of politics, regarded hitherto as the private preserve of the property-owning classes. Day by day the socialist press—theoretical, political, trade-union—revaluates bourgeois values, great and small, from the standpoint of a new world. There is not one question of social and cultural life (marriage, the family, upbringing, the school, the church, the army, patriotism, social hygiene, prostitution) on which socialism has not counterposed its view to the view of bourgeois society. It speaks in all the languages of civilised mankind. There work and fight in the ranks of the socialist movement people of different turns of mind and various temperaments, with different pasts, social connections and habits of life. And if the intelligentsia nevertheless 'don't understand' socialism, if all this together is insufficient to enable them, to compel them to grasp the cultural-historical significance of this world movement, then oughtn't one to draw the conclusion that the causes of this fatal lack of understanding must be very profound and that attempts to overcome it by literary and theoretical means are inherently hopeless?

This idea emerges still more strikingly in the light of history. The biggest influx of intellectuals into the socialist movement—and this applies to all countries in Europe—took place in the first period of the party's existence, when it was still in its childhood. This first wave brought with it the most outstanding theoreticians and politicians of the International. The more European Social-Democracy grew, the bigger the mass of workers that was united around it, the weaker (not only relatively but absolutely) has the influx of fresh elements from the intelligentsia become. The *Leipziger Volkszeitung*[3] sought for a long time in vain, through newspaper advertisements, an editorial worker with a university training. Here a conclusion forces itself upon us, a conclusion completely contrary to Adler: the more definitely socialism has revealed its content, the easier it has become for each and everyone to understand its mission in history, the more decidedly have the intelligentsia recoiled from it. While this does not mean that they fear socialism itself, it is nevertheless plain that in the capitalist countries of Europe there must have occurred some deep-going social changes which have hindered fraternization between university people and the workers, at the same time as they have facilitated the coming of the workers to the socialist movement.

What sort of changes have these been? The most intelligent individuals, groups and strata from the proletariat have joined and are joining Social-Democracy. The growth and concentration of industry and transport is merely hastening this process. A completely different type of process is going on where the intelligentsia are concerned. The tremendous capitalist development of the last two decades has unquestionably skimmed off the cream of this class. The most talented intellectual forces, those with power of initiative and flight of thought, have been irrevocably absorbed by capitalist industry, by the trusts, railway companies and banks, which pay fantastic salaries for organisational work. Only second-raters remain for the service of the state, and government offices, no less than newspaper editors of all tendencies, complain about the shortage of 'people'. As regards the representatives of the ever-increasing semi-proletarian intelligentsia—unable to escape from their eternally dependent and materially insecure way of life—for them, carrying out as they do fragmentary, second-rate and not very attractive functions in the great mechanism of culture, the cultural interests to which Adler appeals cannot be strong enough independently to direct their political sympathies towards the socialist movement.

Added to this is the circumstance that any European intellectual for whom going over to the camp of collectivism is not psychologically out of the question has practically no hope of winning a position of personal influence for himself in the ranks of the proletarian parties. And this question is of decisive importance. A worker comes to socialism as a part of a whole, along with his class, from which he has no prospect of escaping. He is even pleased with the feeling of his moral unity with the mass, which makes him more confident and stronger. The intellectual, however, comes to socialism, breaking his class umbilical cord, as an individual, as a personality, and inevitably seeks to exert influence as an individual. But just here he comes up against obstacles—and as time passes the bigger these obstacles become. At the beginning of the social-democratic movement, every intellectual who joined, even though not above the average, won for himself a place in the working-class movement.

continued on page 6

New Orleans: Protest Cop Attack on Student Rally

We reprint below a September 7 letter from the New York Spartacus Youth Club to the New Orleans district attorney. The two student protesters have been suspended indefinitely and one has been banned from campus.

The Spartacus Youth Club condemns the September 1 police assault on a student protest against budget cuts at the University of New Orleans. Police outrageously arrested protesters Peter Reed and Matthew "Gideon" Smith on charges of "battering police officers" and "resisting arrest." Video footage posted on YouTube shows UNO campus police chief Thomas Harrington choking Smith, an asthmatic who required immediate medical attention after the police pepper-sprayed him in the face.

For exercising their right to protest in defense of public higher education, Reed and Smith face up to five years in prison if convicted on these sham felony charges. The Spartacus Youth Club demands: *Drop the charges against Peter Reed and Matthew Smith!*

Intelligentsia...

(continued from page 5)

Today every newcomer finds, in the Western European countries, the colossal structure of working-class democracy already existing. Thousands of labour leaders, who have automatically been promoted from their class, constitute a solid apparatus at the head of which stand honoured veterans, of recognised authority, figures that have already become historic. Only a man of exceptional talent would in these circumstances be able to hope to win a leading position for himself—but such a man, instead of leaping across the abyss into a camp alien to him, will naturally follow the line of least resistance into the realm of industry or state service. Thus there also stands between the intelligentsia and socialism, like a watershed, in addition to everything else, the organisational apparatus of Social-Democracy. It arouses discontent among members of the intelligentsia with socialist sympathies, from whom it demands discipline and self-restraint—sometimes in respect of their 'opportunism' and sometimes, contrariwise, in respect of their excessive 'radicalism'—and dooms them to the role of querulous lookers-on who vacillate in their sympathies between anarchism and national-liberalism. *Simplicissimus*[4] is their highest ideological banner. With various modifications and to varying degrees, this phenomenon is repeated in all countries of Europe. These people are, more than any other group, too blasé, so to speak, too cynical, for a revelation, even the most moving, of the cultural significance of socialism to conquer their souls. Only rare 'ideologues'—using this word in both the good sense and the bad—are capable of coming to socialist convictions under the stimulus of pure theoretical thinking, with, as their points of departure, the demands of law, as in the case of Anton Menger,[5] or the requirements of technique, as in that of Atlanticus.[6] But even such as these, as we know, do not usually get as far as the actual Social-Democratic movement, and the class struggle of the proletariat in its internal connection with socialism remains for them a book sealed with seven seals.

In considering that it is impossible to win the intelligentsia to collectivism with a programme of immediate material gains Adler is absolutely right. But this still does not signify that it is possible to win the intelligentsia by any means at all, nor that immediate material interests and class ties do not affect the intelligentsia more cogently than all the cultural-historical prospects offered by socialism.

If we exclude that stratum of the intelligentsia which directly serves the working masses, as workers' doctors, lawyers, and so on (a stratum which, as a general rule, is composed of the less talented representatives of these professions), then we see that the most important and influential part of the intelligentsia owes its livelihood to payments out of industrial profit, rent from land or the state budget, and thus is directly or indirectly dependent on the capitalist classes or the capitalist state.

Illustrierte Zeitung

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European Revolutions of 1848. Left: Uprising in Vienna in March. Below: Battle between workers and troops in Paris in June. Students supported bourgeois-democratic revolution in Vienna, sided with bourgeois reaction in Paris.

Abstractly considered, this material dependence puts out of the question only militant political activity in the anti-capitalist ranks, but not spiritual freedom itself. Doctors and lawyers, despite the more independent nature of their work, necessarily have to be in psychological contact with their clients. While an electrician can, day after day, instal electric wiring in the offices of ministers, bankers and their mistresses, and yet remain himself in spite of this, it is a different matter for a doctor, who is obliged to find music in his soul and in his voice which will accord with the feelings and habits of these persons. This sort of contact, moreover, inevitably takes place not only at the top end of bourgeois society. The suffragettes of London engage a pro-suffragette lawyer to defend them. A doctor who treats majors' wives in Berlin or the wives of 'Christian-Social' shopkeepers in Vienna, a lawyer who handles the affairs of their fathers, brothers, and husbands, can hardly allow himself the luxury of enthusiasm for the cultural prospects of collectivism. All this applies likewise to writers, artists, sculptors, entertainers—not so directly and immediately, but no less inexorably. They offer the public their work or their personalities, they depend on its approval and its money, and so, whether in an open or a hidden way, they subordinate their creative achievement to that 'great monster' which they hold in such contempt: the bourgeois mob. The fate of Germany's 'young' school of writers—now already, by the way, getting rather thin on top—shows the truth of this as well as anything. The example of Gorky, explained by the conditions of the epoch in which he grew up, is an exception which merely proves the rule: his inability to adapt himself to the anti-revolutionary degeneration of the intelligentsia rapidly deprived him of his 'popularity'.

Here is revealed once more the profound social difference between the conditions of brain work and manual work. Though it enslaves the muscles and exhausts the body, factory work is powerless to subject to itself the worker's mind. All the measures which have been attempted to get control of the latter, in Switzerland as in Russia, have proved uniformly fruitless. The brain worker is from the physical standpoint incomparably freer. The writer does not have to get up when the hooter sounds, behind the doctor's back stands no supervisor, the lawyer's pockets are not searched when he leaves the court. But, in return, he is compelled to sell not his mere labour-power, not just the tension of his muscles, but his entire personality as a human being—and not through fear but through conscientiousness. As a result, these people don't want to see and cannot see that their professional frock-coat is nothing but a prisoner's uniform of better cut than ordinary.

In the end, Adler himself seems to be dissatisfied with his abstract and essentially idealistic formula on the interrelation between the intelligentsia and socialism. In his own propaganda he addresses himself, really, not to the class of brain workers fulfilling definite functions in capitalist society, but to their young generation who are only at the stage of preparing for their future role—to the students. Evidence of this is provided not only by the dedication 'To the Free Students' Union of Vienna' but also by the very nature of this pamphlet-speech, its impassioned agitational and sermonizing tone. It would be unthinkable to express oneself in this manner before an audience of professors, writers, lawyers, doctors. Such a speech would stick in one's throat after the first few words. Thus, in direct dependence on the human material with which he finds himself working, Adler himself limits his task. The politician corrects the formula of the theoretician. In the end it is a question of struggle for influence over the *students*.

The university is the final stage of the state-organised education of the sons of the possessing and ruling classes, just as the barracks is the final educational institution for the young generation of the workers and peasants. The barracks fosters the psychological habits of obedience and discipline appropriate to the subordinate social functions to be fulfilled subsequently. The university, in principle, trains for management, leadership, government. From this angle even the German student societies are useful class institutions, since they create traditions which unite fathers and sons, strengthen national self-esteem, implant the habits which are needed in a bourgeois setting, and, finally, supply scars on the nose or under the ear which will serve as the stamp of one's belonging to the ruling class. The human material which passes through the barracks is, of course, incomparably more important for Adler's party than that which passes through the university. But in certain historical circumstances—namely, when, with rapid industrial development, the army is proletarian in its social composition, as is the case in Germany—the party can nevertheless say: 'I won't trouble to go into the barracks. It's enough for me to see the young worker as far as its threshold and [the main thing] to meet him when he comes out again. He won't leave me, he'll stay mine.'[7] But where the university is concerned, the party, if it wants at all to carry out an independent struggle for influence over the intelligentsia, must say exactly the opposite: 'Only here and only now, when the young fellow is to a certain extent freed from his family, and when he has not yet become the captive of his position in society, can I count on drawing him into our ranks. It's now or never.'

Among the workers the difference between 'fathers' and 'sons' is purely one of age. Among the intelligentsia it is not only a difference of age but also a social difference. The student, in contrast both

Spartacus Youth Club Events

BAY AREA

Saturday, Sept. 25, 3 p.m.
Workers Vanguard Readers Circle
Racist Police Terror and the Killing of Oscar Grant
The Fight for Black Freedom and for Socialist Revolution
1634 Telegraph Ave., Oakland
(near corner of 17th and Telegraph and 19th St. BART Station; left-hand doorbell)
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
sycbayarea@sbcglobal.net

CHICAGO

Wednesday, Sept. 29, 6:30 p.m.
U.S. Imperialism: World's Biggest Exploiter, World's Biggest Terrorist!
University of Illinois at Chicago
African American Cultural Center
Gallery Room 207
Addams Hall
830 S. Halsted Street
(take Blue Line—UIC Halsted stop)
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
chicagosyc@sbcglobal.net

Visit the ICL Web Site:
www.icl-fi.org

LOS ANGELES

Thursday, Sept. 30, 6 p.m.
Meet the Marxists
UCLA, Ackerman Union
Room 3516
For more information:
(213) 380-8239 • slsycla@sbcglobal.net

TORONTO

Wednesday, Sept. 29, 6 p.m.
Canada: Junior Partner of U.S. Imperialism
University of Toronto
Ontario Institute
for Studies in Education
252 Bloor St. West
Room 4420
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
spartcan@on.aibn.com

VANCOUVER

Thursday, Oct. 14, 6:30 p.m.
Marxism vs. Anarchism on the State and Revolution
University of British Columbia
Student Union Building
Room 212
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
trotskyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

to the young worker and to his own father, fullils no social function, does not feel direct dependence on capital or the state, is not bound by any responsibilities, and—at least objectively, if not subjectively—is free in his judgement of right and wrong. At this period everything within him is fermenting, his class prejudices are as formless as his ideological interests, questions of conscience matter very strongly to him, his mind is opening for the first time to great scientific generalisations, the extraordinary is almost a physiological need for him. If collectivism is at all capable of mastering his mind, now is the moment, and it will indeed do it through the nobly scientific character of its basis and the comprehensive cultural content of its aims, not as a prosaic 'knife and fork' question. On this last point Adler is absolutely right.

Brown Brothers

John Reed before going to report on 1917 Russian Revolution. Harvard graduate betrayed his class to side with workers.

But here too we are again obliged to pull up short before a bald fact. It is not only Europe's intelligentsia as a whole but its offspring, too, the students, who decidedly don't show any attraction towards socialism. There is a wall between the workers' party and the mass of the students. To account for this fact merely by the inadequacy of agitational work, which has not been able to approach the intelligentsia from the correct angle, which is how Adler tries to account for it, means overlooking the whole history of the relations between the students and the 'people', it means seeing in the students an intellectual and moral category rather than a product of social history. True, their material dependence on bourgeois society affects the students only obliquely, through their families, and is therefore weakened. But, as against this, the general social interests and needs of the classes from which the students are recruited are reflected in the feelings and opinions of the students with full force, as though in a resonator. Throughout their entire history—in its best, most heroic moments just as in periods of utter moral decay—the students of Europe have been merely the sensitive barometer of the bourgeois classes. They became ultra-revolutionary, sincerely and honourably fraternizing with the people, when bourgeois society had no way out but revolution. They took *de facto* the place of the bourgeois democratic forces when the political nullity of these prevented them from standing at the head of the revolution, as happened in Vienna in 1848. But they also fired on the workers in June of that same year, in Paris, when bourgeoisie and workers found themselves on opposite sides of the barricade. After Bismarck's wars had united Germany and appeased the bourgeois classes, the German student hastened to become that figure, bloated with beer and conceit, who, alongside the Prussian lieutenant, is always turning up in the satirical papers. In Austria the student became the banner-bearer of national exclusiveness and militant chauvinism in proportion as the conflict grew sharper between the different nations of this country for influence over the government. And there is no doubt that through all these historical transformations, even the most repellent, the students showed political keenness, and readiness for self-sacrifice, and militant idealism; the qualities on which Adler relies so strongly. Though the normal philistine of 30 or 40 will not risk getting his face smashed in for any hypothetical notions about 'honour', his son will do this, with fervour. The Ukrainian and Polish students at Lvov University recently showed us again that they not only know how to carry out any national or political tendency to the very end, but also to offer their breasts to the muzzles of revolvers. Last year the German students of Prague were ready to face all the violence of the mob in order to demonstrate in the street their right to exist as a German society. Here we have militant idealism—sometimes just like that of a fighting cock—which is characteristic not of a class or of an idea but of an age-group; on the other hand, the political content of this idealism is entirely determined by the historical spirit of those classes from which the students come and to which they return. And this is natural and inevitable.

In the last analysis, all possessing classes send their sons to university, and if students were to be, while at the university, a *tabula rasa* on which socialism could write its message, what would then become of class heredity, and of poor old historical determinism?

It remains, in conclusion, to clarify one other aspect of the question, which speaks both for Adler and against him.

The only way to attract the intelligentsia to socialism, according to Adler, is to bring to the forefront the ultimate aim of the movement, in its full scope. But Adler recognises, of course, that this ultimate aim looms clearer and more complete in proportion to the progress of the concentration of industry, the proletarianization of the middle strata and the intensification of class antagonisms. Independently of the will of political leaders and the differences in national tactics, in Germany the 'ultimate aim' stands forth with incomparably greater clarity and immediacy than in Austria or Italy. But this very same social process, the intensification of the struggle between labour and capital, hinders the intelligentsia from crossing over to the camp of the party of labour. The bridges between the classes are broken down, and to cross over, one would have to leap across an abyss which gets deeper with every passing day. Thus, parallel with conditions that objectively make it easier for the intelligentsia to grasp theoretically the essence of collectivism, the social obstacles are growing greater in the way of political adhesion by the intelligentsia to the socialist army. Joining the socialist movement in any advanced country, where social life exists, is not a speculative act, but a political one, and here social will completely prevails over theorizing reason. And this finally means that it is harder to win the intelligentsia today than it was yesterday, and that it will be harder tomorrow than it is today.

In this process, too, however, there is a 'break in gradualness'. The attitude of the intelligentsia to socialism, which we have described as one of alienation which increases with the very growth of the socialist movement, can and must change decisively as a result of an objective political change which will shift the balance of social forces in radical fashion. Among Adler's assertions this much is true, that the intelligentsia is interested in the retention of capitalist exploitation not directly and not unconditionally, but only obliquely, through the bourgeois classes, in so far as the intelligentsia is materially dependent on these latter. The intelligentsia might go over to collectivism if it were given reason to see as probable the *immediate* victory of collectivism, if collectivism arose before it not as the ideal of a different, remote and alien class but as a near and tangible reality; finally, if—and this is not the least important condition—a political break with the bourgeoisie did not threaten each brain-worker taken separately with grave material and moral consequences. Such conditions can be established for the intelligentsia of Europe only by the political rule of a new social class; to some extent by a period of direct and immediate struggle for this rule. Whatever may have been the alienation of the European intelligentsia from the working masses—and this alienation will increase still further, especially in the younger capitalist countries, like Austria, Italy, the Balkan countries—nevertheless, in an epoch of great social reconstruction the intelligentsia—sooner, probably, than the other intermediate classes—will go over to the side of the defenders of the new society. A big role will be played in this connection by the intelligentsia's social qualities, which distinguish it from the commercial and industrial petty-bourgeoisie and peasantry: its occupational ties with the cultural branches of social labour, its capacity for theoretical generalization, the flexibility and mobility of its thinking; in short, its *intellectuality*. Confronted with the inescapable fact of the transfer of the entire apparatus of society into new hands, the intelligentsia of Europe will be able to convince itself that the conditions thus established not only will not cast them into the abyss but on the contrary, will open before them unlimited possibilities for the application of technical, organisational and scientific forces; and they will be able to bring forward these forces from their ranks, even in the first, most critical period, when the new regime will have to overcome enormous technical, social and political difficulties.

But if the actual conquest of the apparatus of society depended on the *previous* coming over of the intelligentsia to the party of the European proletariat, then the prospects of collectivism would be wretched indeed—because, as we have endeavoured to show above, the coming over of the intelligentsia to Social-Democracy within the framework of the bourgeois regime is getting, contrary to all Max Adler's expectations, less and less possible as time goes by.■

George Grosz

Drawing from George Grosz's 1923 collection *The Day of Reckoning*, which indicted capitalist system. Image was captioned: "Please yourself in life!"

1922 congress of Communist Youth International. Inset: 1925 poster depicts youth from around the world drawn to banner of Communism.

BSE, A. Strakhov (inset)

GALART

Model of Vladimir Tatlin's sculpture *Monument to the Third International* on parade through streets of Moscow, circa 1927.

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[1] Editor of the *Wiener Arbeiterzeitung*, organ of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party—Trans.

[2] In this period, Social-Democracy refers to the Socialist political movement, without meaning those who took the path of betrayal during and after the First World War.

[3] German Social-Democratic newspaper—Trans.

[4] A satirical paper published in Munich—Trans.

[5] An Austrian jurist—Trans.

[6] Pseudonym of Karl Ballod, a Lettish-German economist—Trans.

[7] This attitude was that of the German Social-Democratic Party and was, of course, completely inadequate from the revolutionary standpoint.—L.T.

China: Labor Struggles in the "Socialist Market Economy"

This part concludes this article, Part One of which appeared in WV *No. 964 (10 September).*

PART TWO

Whatever the respectful attitude Chinese workers may have toward the country's labor laws, the recent strike wave brought discredit to the main institution by which the bureaucracy seeks to contain and control labor unrest: the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU). Several years ago, the federation leadership announced its intention to organize workers employed in enterprises owned by Western, Japanese and offshore Chinese companies. In 2004, the notoriously anti-union American company Wal-Mart agreed to ACFTU membership and representation in its retail outlets. This was played up in the Chinese media as an important gain for labor. In an article at the time, we described the ACFTU as contradictory:

> "On the one hand, as the only union body legally allowed in China, the ACFTU is an arm of the Stalinist bureaucracy, whose aim is to maintain its privileges and rule, including by policing the workers. At the same time, even the official unions have at times participated in some of the large-scale labor protests that Chinese workers have engaged in in recent years to defend their livelihoods against the bureaucracy's 'market reforms'."
>
> —"Labor: Organize Wal-Mart!" *WV* No. 851, 8 July 2005

Since then, ACFTU functionaries have generally sought, above all, to maintain labor peace by discouraging effective actions by the workers. Workers at the Honda transmission plant complained about paying union dues when union officials did nothing for them, especially in terms of negotiating with management on their behalf. We've noted that one of the strike demands was for new elections for local union chairman and other representatives. Workers during the Honda Lock strike went further. One of them, who insisted on anonymity, told Western journalists: "The trade union is not representing our views; we want our own union that will represent us" (*New York Times*, 10 June). Strikers staged a protest march in Zhongshan chanting their demands, among them the right to form an independent union.

AP

Wal-Mart workers in Kunming vote to form a union, August 2008.

We have always recognized that labor unions, factory committees and other inclusive economic organizations of the working class independent of direct bureaucratic control are key elements in the transitional program for proletarian political revolution in China and other deformed workers states. Even in a workers state governed by genuine workers democracy, trade unions independent of (though not opposed to) the state administration are necessary to protect against possible encroachments and abuses and to help plan production and work methods. Addressing the question of trade unions in the early Soviet workers state, V.I. Lenin insisted that communists should fight for leadership of the unions based on their program and practice on behalf of the workers state. They must be selected by the workers and not appointed by the state authorities.

Xinhua

National congress of CCP regime's All-China Federation of Trade Unions, Beijing, October 2008.

Lessons of Capitalist Counterrevolution in the Former Soviet Sphere

The fight for unions free of bureaucratic control must take as its starting point defense of the social gains of the 1949 Revolution against imperialism and capitalist restoration. The experience of the former Soviet sphere, particularly Poland, points to the possibility that independent labor organizations could come under an anti-Communist leadership that effectively exploits the workers' hostility to the ruling bureaucratic caste. Polish Solidarność spearheaded the imperialist-backed drive for capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe in the 1980s.

Sections of the bourgeois media, especially in the U.S., have likened the demand by some Chinese workers for their own, independent unions to a potential Solidarność-type development. For its part, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime also raises the spectre of Solidarność, falsely claiming that any organized opposition to its rule must be pro-capitalist and counterrevolutionary. An article by Willy Lam, a professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, in the *Wall Street Journal* (14 June) reported that in closed-door talks on the recent labor unrest, Chinese president Hu Jintao and other CCP Politburo members "cited late patriarch Deng Xiaoping's warnings about how Poland's Solidarity Movement undermined Communist Parties throughout the former Eastern bloc."

However, the factors that gave rise to Solidarność as a counterrevolutionary movement have no parallel in China. It is an imperialist *falsification* that this "free" trade union arose as a spontaneous opposition by the mass of Polish workers to the Communist government and system. While formed in the course of a general strike in the summer of 1980, the *pre-existing political and organizational base* of Solidarność was the Roman Catholic church in league with a small group of right-wing social democrats, Jacek Kuron's Committee for Social Self-Defense (KOR).

Under the liberal Stalinist regimes of Wladyslaw Gomulka and Edward Gierek, the Catholic church had functioned as a de facto, mass political opposition to the Soviet-backed Communist government since the mid 1950s. The church was identified and identified itself with traditional Polish enmity to Russia, which had subjugated Poland as part of the tsarist empire from the late 18th to the early 20th centuries. A strong clerical-nationalist current, centered on the church hierarchy, depicted Communism as a new form of Russian domination over Poland.

In the late 1970s, under the pressure of imperialism (U.S. president Jimmy Carter's "human rights" campaign), the Gierek regime also tolerated the activities of a coterie of social-democratic "dissidents" who collaborated with the church hierarchy and were protected by it. In 1978, the historically unprecedented elevation of a Polish prelate to the papacy further strengthened the authority of the church vis-à-vis the Stalinist regime. It was in this period that Lech Walesa and other future leaders of Solidarność received their political training in anti-Communist oppositional circles organized by the church hierarchy and KOR.

While recognizing the reactionary clerical-nationalist politics of the Solidarność leadership around Walesa, we nonetheless did not oppose its legalization. The situation of political openness, albeit short-lived and unstable, provided some space in which a Leninist-Trotskyist tendency could develop and win workers to the program of proletarian political revolution throughout the Soviet sphere. We condemned the Stalinist bureaucracy for its nationalism, economic mismanagement and decades of capitulation to the Catholic church and other pro-capitalist forces, which drove many of that generation of

Defend the Chinese Deformed Workers State Against Imperialism, Capitalist Counterrevolution!

For Proletarian Political Revolution!

the historically socialist-minded proletariat of Poland into the arms of reaction.

However, when Solidarność consolidated on a program of open counterrevolution at its first congress in September 1981, we declared that this "threat must be crushed at all costs and by any means necessary" and supported the Stalinist regime's move to suppress it in December 1981. Solidarność had become a multi-class, anti-Communist movement. We wrote at the time: "Solidarity is no longer a trade union, but has come to include large sections of the intelligentsia, petty bureaucrats, priests, etc." ("Stop Solidarity's Counterrevolution!" reprinted in Spartacist pamphlet *Solidarność: Polish Company Union for CIA and Bankers* [October 1981]).

Far more relevant than Poland for potential developments in China is the experience of Soviet Russia during the terminal crisis of Stalinist rule in 1989-91. With the disintegration of the bureaucracy under Mikhail Gorbachev, the forces of counterrevolution, mainly drawn from government/party functionaries, intellectuals and petty capitalist operators, cohered around Boris Yeltsin (a former top Kremlin leader) in the so-called "democratic" camp. These forces gained influence over important workers organizations. In early 1991, the main union of coal miners in Siberia engaged in strikes that combined economic and political demands. The latter aimed to strengthen the Yeltsin-led government of the Russian republic while further weakening the beleaguered Kremlin regime of Gorbachev.

At the time, many Russian miners and other workers believed that Western-type "democracy" and "free market" capitalism would in a relatively short period raise Russia to Western levels of economic productivity and living standards. In reality, the restoration of capitalism under the Yeltsin regime in the 1990s was a catastrophe for working people in Russia. Post-Soviet Russia suffered a social and economic collapse of a historically unprecedented magnitude in an advanced industrial society. Writing in 1999, we summarized the indices of that collapse:

> "Production has fallen at least 50 percent since 1991, capital investment by 90 percent. Today a third of the urban labor force in Russia is effectively unemployed; 75 percent of the population lives below or barely above subsistence level and 15 million are actually starving. Life expectancy has fallen dramatically....
> "The infrastructures of production, technology, science, transportation, heating and sewage have disintegrated. Malnutrition has become the norm among school children. Some two million children have been abandoned by families who can no longer support them.... With the disintegration of the former state-run system of universal health care, diseases like tuberculosis are rampant."
>
> —"The Bankruptcy of 'New Class' Theories," *Spartacist* (English-language edition) No. 55, Autumn 1999

A capitalist counterrevolution in China, which is industrially less developed than Soviet Russia and is especially marked by the backwardness of its rural areas, would, if anything, have even more catastrophic consequences, with economic degradation overlaid by imperialist subjugation.

Han Dongfang: Agent of "Democratic" Counterrevolution

Unlike conditions in Soviet Russia under Gorbachev, Chinese workers today are acting in a situation where there appears to be no immediate prospect of significant political change. There is therefore no reason to think that the workers involved in the Honda and other strikes are aiming at anything beyond higher wages, improved social benefits and better working conditions. And they want to elect their own representatives to the local ACFTU branch or at most to form a separate factory-based union to effectively pursue these economic ends.

Insofar as worker activists sought outside support, it was from those elements of the bureaucracy, including its academic component, who were seen as sympathetic to their interests. Thus Li Xiaojuan, a young woman leader of the Foshan Honda strike, contacted the director of the Institute of Labor Relations at Beijing's Renmin University, Chang Kai, and asked him to advise the negotiating committee. He agreed. Predictably, he advised the workers to be flexible in demanding higher wages.

However, when the political situation opens up, anti-Communist forces, supported by the imperialists, will undoubtedly intervene in the renascent workers movement. An aspiring candidate for that role is one Han Dongfang, who runs a well-financed operation centered around the *China Labour Bulletin* (CLB), based in Hong Kong, where the CCP does not exercise a monopoly of political organization. Han is vice-chair of the World Movement for Democracy, an outfit founded and run by the National Endowment for Democracy, a notorious CIA front. Previously, he had a program on the CIA's Radio Free Asia.

Sipa

Boris Yeltsin on barricades of counterrevolution, Moscow, August 1991.

In 2008, Han made a presentation at a hearing of a U.S. Congressional commission on China. For what purpose? Following the scenario of the "human rights" dissidents in the former Soviet sphere, he appealed to American imperialism to pressure the CCP regime to permit the activities of his outfit, especially among workers. He told the political representatives of the Wall Street banks and Fortune 500 corporations: "The active support and involvement of civil rights groups in defending workers rights will be crucial in the development of a functioning civil society in China." In the name of "defending workers rights," Han and his cohorts are actually seeking to re-enslave the Chinese proletariat to the bloody-handed American imperialists.

In the past, Han's outfit advocated "independent" trade unions in China. However, partly in response to the 2008 labor laws, they made a tactical shift. A March 2009 CLB report concluded that there was a "need to establish ***democratically elected grassroots unions*** within the ACFTU" and argued that "because independent unions are illegal in China, these grassroots unions will have to be affiliated to the ACFTU" [emphasis in original]. However, this tactical shift has in no way changed their counterrevolutionary aims. The same CLB report states: "China is now, to all intents and purposes, a market economy." The term "market economy" is used here as a code word for capitalism. By contending that capitalism has already been restored in China, Han & Co. disguise their program for the counterrevolutionary destruction of the workers state as one of extending "democratic rights" and building a "functioning civil society."

The CLB promotes a version of trade unionism in China very much in keeping with that of the pro-capitalist American labor bureaucrats of the AFL-CIO, to which the CLB has a link on its Web site. In response to the global capitalist downturn, the CLB stated that under conditions of genuine collective bargaining, "employees might, for example, be quite willing to accept a temporary pay cut"! Not even ACFTU officials have suggested that workers accept a wage cut to improve the international competitiveness of the firms that employ them. It is no accident that the U.S. labor tops have embraced the CLB. For decades during the anti-Soviet Cold War, the "AFL-CIA" wielded the banner of "free trade unions" in a campaign to destroy unions associated with Communist parties and other left organizations in Europe, Latin America and elsewhere.

Acting as "left"-sounding cheerleaders for the forces of "democratic" counterrevolution in China are a number of groups that falsely claim the mantle of Trotskyism. Prominent among these is the British-centered Committee for a Workers' International (CWI), led by one Peter Taaffe. A 12 June article on the recent strike wave on the CWI Web site (www.socialistworld.net) is written in the language of social-democratic anti-Communism. China is described as the "sweatshop of the world" and the CCP regime as the "ruling 'communist' dictatorship." The author of this screed, Vincent Kolo, is the CWI's leading China "expert." A few years ago he wrote a piece titled "China's Capitalist Counterrevolution" (*Socialism Today*, December 2007-January 2008), in which he asserted: "A section of the former Maoist bureaucracy has converted itself through the 'reform process' into a property owning class."

The CWI's attempt to depict China as capitalist is but a "theoretical" rationale for a ***longstanding*** policy of supporting the forces of capitalist counterrevolution in the degenerated and deformed workers states. In the name of democracy, the Militant tendency, from which the CWI originated, supported imperialist-backed, anti-Communist forces such as Polish Solidarność in the 1980s. In August 1991 in Moscow, their comrades stood on the barricades with Boris Yeltsin and his counterrevolutionary rabble, including petty capitalist operators and their criminal henchmen. It didn't matter that they formally held that these countries were workers states governed by bureaucratic Stalinist regimes. What is fundamental is that the program of the social-democratic Taaffeites is opposed to the defense of the workers states.

Idealizing the Mao Era

The purveyors of "democratic" counterrevolution like Han Dongfang and his group are not the only current of political opposition in China today. There is also a quasi-oppositional current among elements of the bureaucracy and intelligentsia of a neo-Maoist character. Moreover, a certain nostalgia for the Mao era, with its relative egalitarianism and economic security (the "iron rice bowl"), can be found among older workers employed, and especially those formerly employed, in state-owned enterprises.

In *Against the Law: Labor Protests in China's Rustbelt and Sunbelt* (2007), a study of labor protests in the early 2000s, Ching Kwan Lee frequently encountered this attitude in the "rustbelt" province of Liaoning. This region was the site of numerous, often militant, protests by laid-off and forcibly retired workers, mainly over unpaid wages, unemployment allowances, pensions and subsidies. In March 2002, tens of thousands marched through the streets of Liaoyang, some singing the "Internationale," demanding the economic benefits due them and also calling for the ouster of the head of the local legislature, a notoriously corrupt former mayor.

Workers involved in such protests identified public ownership of the means of production with socialism and the 1949 Revolution. They saw themselves as having been in the vanguard of building a socialist society but were then abused and degraded by the post-Mao CCP regimes. One told Lee with deep-felt bitterness:

> "I am a good citizen, a good worker, a progressive producer in the enterprise. No black spot in my background. I have always believed that as long as the Communist Party exists, they would not ignore our problems. I have been loyal to Chairman Mao from the revolution until today.... Thirty-some years of job tenure, at age fifty-three, with young and elderly dependents at home, you make me a laid-off worker."

A technician in his 50s who had once been honored as a model worker lauded the economic security and public glorification

continued on page 10

Der Spiegel

Lech Walesa, counterrevolutionary leader of Vatican-backed Polish Solidarność, prays in front of Gdansk shipyard, 1980.

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China...

(continued from page 9)

of the working class he had experienced in the Mao era:

> "As long as I worked hard and well, I did not have to worry. The work unit took care of my housing, children's employment, and pension.... They used to say the working class was the leadership class. At that time, I believed it because of our status in society and in the enterprise, and our wages were not low.... Our living standard was not high, it's true, compared to the present. But we were worry-free."

An American academic, William Hurst, who did field research among laid-off workers in the same period, reported similar political attitudes. A coal miner on a "long vacation" said to him:

> "The Northeast is dying and the Communist Party does not care about socialism any more. During the planned economy we were all poor. But we were poor together. We were all proletarians. We all ate the food from the common pot. Now, the rich people get richer while we all get poorer."
>
> —*The Chinese Worker After Socialism* (2009)

These expressions of nostalgia for the Mao era implicitly share the same basic (but false) premise as that of the post-Mao Stalinist regime: that economic modernization necessarily entails widening social inequality. One of Deng Xiaoping's best-known aphorisms was "Some must get rich first."

The present-day neo-Maoist political current was given public expression during the recent strike wave in a June 6 "Position Statement of Old Revolutionaries on the Present Upsurge of Worker Action in China" that was addressed to the top party and government leaders. The five signatories are two former state functionaries, one former ACFTU official and two professors at Beijing University. One of the latter, Gong Xiantian, was prominently involved a few years ago in opposing, though unsuccessfully, a new law strengthening the rights of private property.

The statement calls for "the restoration of the working class as the leading class of our country and the re-establishment of socialist public ownership as the mainstay of our national economy," while contending that "in so far as the capitalist privately-owned economy rather than the socialist publicly-owned economy dominates, the working class cannot change their weak position under structures of exploitation, nor the unfair distribution system and the disparity between the rich and poor." It is unclear whether the authors believe that China has been transformed back to a capitalist country under the post-Mao CCP regimes. Even if they do think that, they evidently also believe that the present government of Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao can and should re-transform China back into "a socialist state led by the working class" according to Article 1 of the country's constitution. For self-styled "old revolutionaries," they are very legalistic in their thinking.

Echoing these sentiments, the reformist Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) in the U.S. opines on its Web site that the strike wave presents a "fork in the road for the CCP," whose "orientation toward the working class will be ultimately decisive" ("Class Struggle Intensifies in China," 11 June). The PSL calls on the bureaucratic caste to "alter its course" of concessions to imperialism and "reorient its policy toward winning the allegiance of its historic base of support: the workers and peasants of China." Support, however "critical," for the CCP misrulers is in the PSL's political DNA. Its parent organization, the Workers World Party (WWP), was founded by Sam Marcy and others who, while in the U.S. Socialist Workers Party, supported the crushing of the 1956 Hungarian workers uprising by the Moscow Stalinist regime, which brought that political revolution to a brutal end. In 1989, the WWP likewise hailed Beijing's suppression of the 1989 protests centered in Tiananmen Square, denouncing that incipient proletarian political revolution as counterrevolutionary.

As was true in the former Soviet Union, the planned, collectivized economy established in China following the 1949 Revolution laid the basis for enormous social gains for the workers and peasants. However, as experience in Stalin's Russia and Mao's China also showed, under a Stalinist regime of bureaucratic commandism, a planned, collectivized economy is no guarantee of steady social progress and rising living standards for the populace. Not at all. Here one recalls in particular Mao's "Great Leap Forward" in the late 1950s, a campaign of insane economic adventurism that ended catastrophically. An estimated 20 to 30 million people, mainly on the rural communes, died in the ensuing famine.

Xinhua

Rural "backyard steel furnaces" of late 1950s. Mao's "Great Leap Forward" led to economic collapse and horrific famine.

The neo-Maoist statement is critical, if not condemnatory, of China's integration into the world capitalist market and advocates transforming "our export-oriented economy to one that is independent, self-reliant and seeks to satisfy the material and cultural needs of people in the country." The present size of China's industrial economy (far greater than in the Mao era) requires as an ***objective necessity*** the large-scale importation of fossil fuels, especially oil, and metallic ore, e.g., iron. A move toward economic "self-reliance" (autarky) would lead to a contraction of production, generating increased unemployment and a decline in the living standards of both workers and rural toilers.

Claiming the guidance of "Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought" and harking back to Maoist autarky, the "old revolutionaries" subscribe to the Stalinist doctrine of building "socialism in one country," with its consequent accommodation to world imperialism. Here one should recall that in the early 1970s the Mao regime formed a strategic alliance with U.S. imperialism against the Soviet degenerated workers state. That alliance was continued and deepened under Deng. The Beijing Stalinists' participation in the renewed Cold War offensive led by Washington contributed in no small measure to the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union—a world-historic defeat for the international proletariat—and also provided the political basis for the beginnings of large-scale foreign capitalist investment in China itself.

Magnum

Mao greeting Nixon in 1972 as U.S. rained death and destruction on Vietnam.

Egalitarianism vs. Modernization: A False Counterposition

The perceived antagonism between egalitarianism and modernization is derived from the bureaucratic deformation of the Chinese workers state and, more fundamentally, its position in a world dominated by capitalist imperialism.

In Stalinist-ruled workers states, the advantages of centralized economic planning are limited and subverted by pervasive bureaucratic parasitism and mismanagement. Quantitative output targets are met, but with poor quality and ill-assorted goods. Energy, raw materials and labor power are squandered. State-owned supplies and equipment are diverted into the black market, undermining the socialized economy. When the regime of Mikhail Gorbachev in the USSR scrapped central planning in favor of market-oriented "reforms," we wrote in a 1988 Spartacist pamphlet:

> "Within the framework of Stalinism, there is thus an inherent tendency to replace centralized planning and management with market mechanisms. Since managers and workers cannot be subject to the discipline of soviet democracy (workers councils), increasingly the bureaucracy sees subjecting the economic actors to the discipline of market competition as the only answer to economic inefficiency."
>
> —"For Central Planning Through Soviet Democracy," in *"Market Socialism" in Eastern Europe*

Additionally, recourse to market mechanisms is driven by the personal material interests and appetites of the bureaucratic elite. The neo-Maoist contention that "socialism" and "working-class leadership" were abandoned by Deng and his successors disregards the fact that the core of China's newly emergent capitalist class derives from the CCP cadre of the Mao era and their political (and in many cases biological) children. Many of the managerial and technical functionaries of small- and medium-sized state-owned enterprises gained ownership rights when these were privatized in the late 1990s.

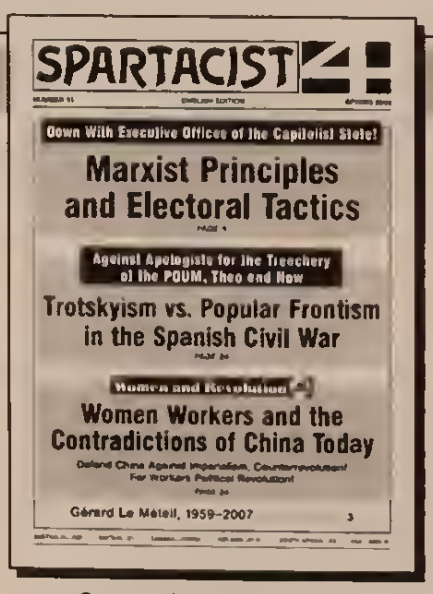
During the Mao era as well as in the post-Mao "reform" era, the working class has had no control whatsoever over economic policies, including sudden shifts that had disastrous consequences. We have already pointed to the "Great Leap Forward" in this respect. There were also the enormously disruptive effects of the "Cultural Revolution" that began in the mid 1960s, a violent campaign launched by Mao against his more pragmatic opponents in the CCP leadership.

Leon Trotsky explained in *The Revolution Betrayed*, his classic analysis of Stalin's Russia in the mid 1930s, that bureaucratic commandism obstructed technological innovation and dynamism:

> "The further you go, the more the economy runs into the problem of quality, which eludes the bureaucracy like a shadow. The Soviet products are as though branded with the gray label of indifference. Under a nationalized economy, quality demands a democracy of producers and consumers, freedom of criticism and initiative—conditions incompatible with a totalitarian regime of fear, lies and flattery.
>
> "Behind the question of quality arise more complicated and grandiose problems which may be comprehended by the concept of independent, technical and cultural creativity."

The Chinese Stalinists have sought to acquire advanced technology by attracting large-scale investment by American, European and Japanese corporations. This policy has certainly contributed to raising the level of economic productivity in China far above that of the Mao era. But it has done so in a way that has greatly increased social inequalities in both the cities and the countryside, which, despite quantitative development, remains mired in backwardness. "Market reforms" have greatly exacerbated regional disparities, although these have been somewhat offset recently by the current regime's economic stimulus program. Furthermore, the large imperialist-dominated capitalist export sector strengthens the forces for an internal capitalist counterrevolution that would reduce China to semicolonial subjugation and economic degradation.

But how can China acquire the advanced technology available in North America, West Europe and Japan—a prerequisite to all-round economic development—except through foreign capitalist investment? What is the alternative? The answer is proletarian revolution in the imperialist centers, thereby laying the basis for an internationally planned socialist



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economy. This revolutionary Marxist program and perspective is fundamentally opposed to the ideology and practice of Chinese Stalinism in both its Maoist and "market socialist" variants.

For a Government of Workers and Peasants Councils!

It is not only anti-Communist counterrevolutionaries like Han Dongfang who falsely identify a democratic government with the Western-type parliamentary system: contested elections based on universal and equal suffrage. In their own way, the Chinese Stalinists also promote a classless (bourgeois) concept of democracy. For many years, there have been multicandidate (though not multi-party) elections for rural village councils in China. Of course, all candidates, even those who are not formally CCP members, must be approved by the local party apparatus, which retains tight political control regardless of which candidate wins. But the form of these elections mirrors bourgeois parliamentarism, which gives the ***appearance*** of equality since the vote of, say, an impoverished peasant leaseholder counts the same as that of a wealthy entrepreneur.

Parliamentary government is, in fact, a political form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. In such a system, the working class is politically reduced to atomized individuals. The bourgeoisie can effectively manipulate the electorate through its control of the media, the education system and the other institutions shaping public opinion. In all capitalist "democracies," government officials, elected and unelected, are bought and paid for by the banks and large corporations.

As Lenin explained in his classic 1918 polemic against Social Democracy, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*:

> "Even in the most democratic bourgeois state the oppressed people at every step encounter the crying contradiction between the *formal* equality proclaimed by the 'democracy' of the capitalists and the thousands of *real* limitations and subterfuges which turn the proletarians into *wage-slaves*....
>
> "Under bourgeois democracy the capitalists, by thousands of tricks—which are the more artful and effective the more 'pure' democracy is developed—*drive* the people away from administrative work, from freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, etc.... The working people are *barred* from participation in bourgeois parliaments (they *never decide* important questions under bourgeois democracy, which are decided by the stock exchange and the banks) by thousands of obstacles."

Peter Turnley

May 1989: Workers contingent arriving in Tiananmen Square. Entry of proletariat into mass student protests heralded incipient political revolution.

Under bourgeois democracy, workers merely have the illusion of some control or power over the government. But in a workers state, the question of workers democracy is not one of abstraction or illusion, but at bottom a question of power. In a workers state like China, the dictatorship of the proletariat is deformed by Stalinist misrule—the proletariat as a class is deprived of political power, which is instead monopolized by an anti-working-class bureaucratic caste whose policies ultimately threaten the very existence of the workers state. This was no less true under Mao than it is today. The working class and rural toilers can exercise real political power only through a dictatorship of the proletariat ruled by their own class-based governing institutions, the soviets (the Russian term for councils), which would be open to all parties defending the collectivized foundations of the workers state. In the work quoted above, Lenin explained:

> "The Soviets are the direct organisation of the working and exploited people themselves, which ***helps*** them to organise and administer their own state in every possible way. And in this it is the vanguard of the working and exploited people, the urban proletariat, that enjoys the advantage of being best united by the large enterprises; it is easier for it than for all others to elect and exercise control over those elected. The Soviet form of organisation automatically ***helps*** to unite all the working and exploited people around their vanguard, the proletariat. The old bourgeois apparatus—the bureaucracy, the privileges of wealth, of bourgeois education, of social connections, etc. (these real privileges are the more varied the more highly bourgeois democracy is developed)—all this disappears under the Soviet form of organisation." [emphasis in original]

For Proletarian Political Revolution!

The potential for a pro-socialist workers uprising was shown in the May-June 1989 Tiananmen upheaval. Protests that began among students opposing corruption and seeking political liberalization were joined by masses of Chinese workers, who were driven into action by their own grievances against the impact of the regime's market measures, especially high inflation. Workers' assemblies and motorized flying squads were thrown up, pointing to the potential for the emergence of authentic worker, soldier and peasant councils.

It was the entry into struggle of the working class that marked an incipient proletarian political revolution in May-June 1989. The terrified CCP leaders eventually unleashed fierce repression. Initially, however, the bureaucracy, including the military officer corps, began to fracture under the impact of the proletarian upsurge. The first army units that were mobilized refused to act in the face of enormous popular support for the protests among Beijing's working people. Other, more regime-loyal army units had to be brought in to carry out the bloodletting of June 1989, which overwhelmingly targeted workers rather than students. (For more, see "The Spectre of Tiananmen and Working-Class Struggle in China Today," *WV* Nos. 836 and 837, 12 and 26 November 2004.)

The crucial missing element, during the Tiananmen events as well as today, is an authentic Bolshevik—i.e., Leninist-Trotskyist—party to rally the working masses around the banner of workers democracy and communist internationalism. Championing the interests of workers in both the state-owned and private sectors and defending national and ethnic minorities against Han chauvinism, such a party would be forged in political combat against currents emerging out of the decomposing Stalinist bureaucracy and also against anti-Communist purveyors of Western-type "democracy."

The survival and advancement of China's revolutionary gains hinge on the fight for socialist revolution in the advanced capitalist countries of Japan, North America and West Europe—the only road toward the all-round modernization of China as part of an international planned economy. A proletarian political revolution creating a China of worker and peasant councils would be a beacon for the oppressed working masses of Asia and the entire world, inspiring the downtrodden masses of the former Soviet Union and East Europe and the workers in the imperialist heartlands to struggle for new October Revolutions. It is toward that goal that the International Communist League fights to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International—world party of socialist revolution.■

LAPD...

(continued from page 16)

convicted of unprovoked shootings and beatings, frame-ups, stealing, bank robbery and more throughout the late 1990s. In 2007, cops brutally attacked demonstrators, journalists and bystanders at a MacArthur Park rally to support immigrant rights.

In L.A. and throughout the country, the capitalist rulers deploy the cops as a racist occupying army on the streets of the ghettos and barrios. It is the cops' job to terrorize black people and immigrants and bust up picket lines in defense of capitalist rule and profits. As V. I. Lenin, whose Bolshevik Party led the 1917 workers revolution in Russia, wrote in *The State and Revolution*, "The state is an organ of class ***rule***, an organ for the ***oppression*** of one class by another." The cops, like the prisons and prosecutors, are at the core of that organ of capitalist class domination. They are accountable only to the bourgeoisie whom they serve and protect as hired thugs—whichever capitalist party is in power, Democratic or Republican.

The killing of Manuel Jamines is part of a wave of cop terror against immigrants coming from the top. While criticizing Arizona's notorious apartheid-style, anti-immigrant pass law, the Obama White House surpassed the Bush administration by deporting nearly 400,000 people last year. The Arizona law passed a week after hundreds of I.C.E. agents and other cop forces carried out a military-style attack on shuttle van businesses transporting immigrant workers in Phoenix, Tucson, Rio Rico and Nogales. Heralded as the biggest smuggling bust in I.C.E.'s history, these raids provide a chilling snapshot of the Democrats' program for "immigration reform." The government's onslaught against immigrants emboldened neo-Nazis to rally at L.A. City Hall in April, where, protected by the LAPD, these scum called to "Reclaim the Southwest" for the white race. This fascist provocation underscores the crucial need for the labor movement to defend immigrants and organize the unorganized. We say: ***Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!***

Now, cynically wringing their hands over the depth of the anger over the killing of Jamines, the city's rulers have charged "outsiders" with instigating the protests, taking a page from the playbook of black Democratic Oakland mayor Ron Dellums. When protests erupted in Oakland last year after transit police shot and killed Oscar Grant, a young black man and father, while he lay face-down and pleading on a BART platform, Dellums also blamed "outsiders." It's an old line, echoing the Southern segregationists who hailed civil rights activists in the 1950s and '60s as "outside agitators."

In this case, the LAPD and local media have a specific target, the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP). LAPD Police Chief Beck went after them by name, and the *Los Angeles Times* ran the online headline "Self-Styled Communists Helped Fuel Westlake Clash with Police," carrying similar provocations in their printed press as well. We say: Hands off the RCP! No reprisals against the protesters!

The outrage over the killing of Manuel Jamines would find powerful expression if the city's labor movement—Latino, black, Asian and white—mobilized in protest. While L.A. has historically been an open shop town, over the past two decades Latino workers have been at the center of a revival of labor struggle, including janitors, truckers, grocery workers and more. In 1992, after Los Angeles exploded in protest over the acquittal of the cops who brutalized black motorist Rodney King, we wrote in "L.A. Upheaval Shakes America" (*WV* No. 551, 15 May 1992) that the paramilitary L.A. cops "think they can get away with murder, ***and do***, because they have never been on the receiving end of workers power." The article quoted a PDC call for "powerful L.A. unions such as longshore, aerospace and city workers" to "organize work stoppages and mass mobilizations to solidarize with and defend the black community."

An "L.A. Branch Statement" by the RCP raises the call to "indict and jail the killer cops," while the Party of Socialism and Liberation's ANSWER coalition called a September 18 protest around such demands as "community control over the police" and "no more raids, racial profiling or police violence targeting oppressed communities." These demands reinforce the liberal lie that the cops—the guard dogs of the capitalist order—can be cleaned up and made accountable to the "will of the people." The bitter reality is there will be no end to racist cop terror short of a socialist revolution that smashes the capitalist state and places the working class in power. When the bourgeoisie feels it has to clean up some especially egregious cop corruption or brutality, as in the 1999-2001 Rampart case, the aim is simply to refurbish the image of the capitalist state.

In sharp contrast to the RCP and PSL reformists, at the September 18 rally called to protest Jamines' killing, the L.A. Spartacist League and Labor Black League carried signs including, "No Illusions in Civilian Review Boards! Racist Cops, Racist Courts—Enemies of Labor, Blacks, Immigrants" and "Black, Asian, Latino, White—Mobilize Labor Power to Defend Immigrant Rights!" The social power of the multiracial working class is held in check by the pro-capitalist labor misleaders, who tie the unions to the class enemy through support to the Democratic Party and put themselves forward as advisers to the ruling class on "immigration reform"—i.e., how the capitalists can best exploit immigrant labor—while barely waging any struggle to *organize* these workers. In L.A., the labor tops are busy funneling union funds to support Democrat Jerry Brown's run for governor while they don't say a single word about the brutal killing of Manuel Jamines.

What's necessary is to unite the enormous potential social power of the working class with the anger of the ghetto and barrio masses in ***class struggle*** against the capitalists and their system. But unleashing that power requires a political struggle to oust the labor bureaucrats and forge a new, class-struggle leadership. This task goes hand in hand with the fight to build a revolutionary workers party that acts as a tribune of the people. As a Spartacist sign at the September 18 rally stated: "Break with the Democrats, Party of Racism and War! For a Workers Party that Fights for Socialist Revolution!"■

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Global Warming...

(continued from page 1)

problem. Marxism is opposed to environmentalist ideology, which accepts the inviolability of capitalist class rule, in which production is profit-driven and society's wealth is monopolized by a tiny bourgeois ruling class. We fight for a society that will provide *more*, not less,

PART ONE

for the working people and the impoverished masses of the world. Our goal is to eliminate material scarcity and qualitatively advance the living standards of all. To this end, we fight for socialist revolutions in the capitalist countries to expropriate the bourgeoisie and for proletarian political revolutions in China and the other bureaucratically deformed workers states, laying the basis for the construction of a planned, collectivized world economy. With production liberated from the profit motive, humans' creative powers will be unleashed to build a society in which poverty, malnutrition, inequality and oppression are things of the past.

When the workers of the world rule, energy will be generated and used in the most rational, efficient and safe manner possible, including by developing new energy sources. We do not rule out in advance the use of fossil fuels or any other energy source—nuclear, hydroelectric, solar, wind, etc. Simply to promote modernization and all-round development in the Third World, where today billions are locked in desperate poverty, would almost certainly involve *far greater* energy production on a global scale.

It is futile to attempt to deal with climate-related problems within the boundaries of the anarchic, nationally based capitalist system. The climate is the outcome of interactions among the atmosphere, the oceans, the ice sheets, living organisms and the soils, sediments and rocks, which all affect, to a greater or lesser extent, the movement of heat around the surface of the Earth. The best prospect for positively influencing something as dynamic, large and complex as the climate system is to undertake coordinated global action based on the latest science and technology.

With the world economy reorganized on a socialist basis, a plan on a scale unimaginable under capitalism for minimizing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating the impacts of warming could be worked out and implemented. If necessary, a concerted effort could be undertaken to retool entire industries and transform their operations, whether in energy production and distribution, transportation, construction, manufacturing or agriculture.

Crucially, increasing abundance also will eliminate the material factors—and backward social values, such as those expounded by religions—that fuel population growth. As we will develop in Part Two of this article, a socialist reorganization of society would lay the basis for a prolonged, mild population shrinkage, helping to ensure that there are enough resources for the well-being of all.

Climate Science and Global Warming

The climate of the Earth naturally undergoes constant change, driven by periodic shifts in the Earth's orbital motions and axial tilt as well as variations in sunlight intensity and volcanic activity. Analysis of ice and ocean sediment cores has shown periods of prolonged ice ages and interglacial periods over the past few million years. The interglacials include times when the world was warmer than today and cold-intolerant reptiles lived above the Arctic Circle. The geological record indicates that the transition from the last ice age, which peaked 20,000 years ago, to the warmth of today was no gentle change but rather the wildest of roller-coaster rides. The beginning and end of some climate spikes took place over mere decades.

Outside of the "climate skeptics" (including those in the pay of Big Oil), it is widely accepted that human activities are also influencing the climate. The 2007 report of the IPCC, arguably the world's most authoritative climate body, concludes: "Warming of the climate system is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice and rising global average sea level." The report adds: "Most of the observed increase in global average temperatures since the mid-20th century is *very likely* due to the observed increase in anthropogenic GHG [greenhouse gas] concentrations." Written and reviewed by thousands of scientists worldwide, this report draws on the latest scientific and technical data and represents a broad consensus within the scientific community.

"Anthropogenic greenhouse gases" impact the climate by enhancing what is called by inaccurate analogy the atmospheric "greenhouse effect." As mathematical physicist Jean Baptiste Fourier first described in the 1820s, energy in the form of light from the sun mostly passes through the atmosphere to reach the surface of the Earth and heats it, but heat cannot so easily escape back into space. The air absorbs a significant fraction of the total infrared radiation (what Fourier called "dark heat") emitted by the Earth, and some of this thermal energy is radiated back down to the surface, helping it to stay warm. The surface of an Earth-like planet with no atmosphere would be on average roughly 59°F (33°C) colder than the Earth actually is, and the contrast in temperature between night and day and between summer and winter would be very large, as suggested by the case of the Moon.

However, not all gases in the atmosphere are equal in keeping the Earth warm. The most abundant atmospheric constituents, diatomic nitrogen and oxygen, are almost transparent to infrared radiation, which is strongly absorbed by molecules of water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and ozone. Outside of water vapor, carbon dioxide is the most abundant of these "greenhouse gases," presently constituting about 390 parts per million (ppm) by volume and amounting to a total mass of roughly 3,000 metric gigatons (three trillion tons). This concentration has risen significantly in a relatively short time from a level of 280 ppm before the Industrial Revolution, as determined by ice-core measurements. Carbon dioxide is presently accumulating at a rate of over two ppm per year.

Humans through a variety of activities contribute significantly to the atmospheric concentrations of the greenhouse gases. Burning fossil fuels and wood releases carbon dioxide; livestock, oil production and coal mining add methane; agricultural processes and the production of nitric acid contribute nitrous oxide. Other practices, such as logging, also play a role because forests absorb carbon dioxide from the air and store it. But the spotlight has fallen on fossil fuel combustion, which accounts for the vast majority of carbon dioxide emitted annually through human activity. While the oceans, topsoil and land vegetation absorb about half of these emissions, the rest accumulate in the atmosphere, where they are available to strengthen the greenhouse effect.

The possible consequences of global warming evoked by a number of scientists are extremely serious. But the workings of the climate system are still only partly understood, so nobody can say that any projection is certain to happen. There is a chance that the impact of human-induced warming will not be as bad as predicted by the IPCC and others, but there also is a chance that the outcome will be worse. The range of possibilities finds its reflection in the scientific community, with a small minority criticizing the 2007 IPCC report as overstated and others disapproving of its "conservatism."

The report predicts rising sea levels and coastal flooding as the result of melting polar ice sheets and thermal expansion of the oceans. It projects climate shifts that would cause populated areas to become arid or inundated and would bring about the extinction of many marine and terrestrial species. Already the number of "very dry areas" on the planet has more than doubled since the 1970s to about 30 percent of the total landmass. Reduction of the West Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets similar to past interglacial reductions would cause the sea level to rise ten or more meters, enough to submerge dozens of great world cities, from New York to Shanghai.

Significant warming over decades could also trigger mechanisms that would qualitatively alter the climate. The complete thawing of the Arctic permafrost could unlock gigatons of stored carbon, most of it in the form of methane, a significantly more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. An even more remote but far-reaching possibility would be the release of the colossal amounts of methane now enclosed in water-ice crystals (structures known as clathrates) found in the depths of the Arctic and other oceans.

Paradoxically, the warming of the atmosphere might also plunge much of the Northern Hemisphere into a deep freeze. If a sufficient flow of freshwater from melting ice were dumped into the North Atlantic, the vast ocean conveyor known as the Gulf Stream would collapse. Originating in the Gulf of Mexico, this powerful current drags warm water northward and is responsible for heating West Europe, Canada and the Northeast U.S.

A raft of findings since 2007 has refined and altered the IPCC's predictions—and shown the uncertainties involved with climate modeling. In one case, the latest research by MIT hurricane expert Kerry Emanuel, earlier one of the leading proponents of a link between global warming and much stronger and more frequent hurricanes, now calls into question that conclusion. Earlier this year, the IPCC acknowledged a series of scientific blunders and retracted the dramatic warning in its 2007 report that most Himalayan glaciers would be melted by 2035. Scientific rigor is further put at risk by climate researchers who refuse to publish the computer code for their models, a practice that came to light during the University of East Anglia "Climategate" e-mail scandal engineered by right-wingers.

Even the most sophisticated models

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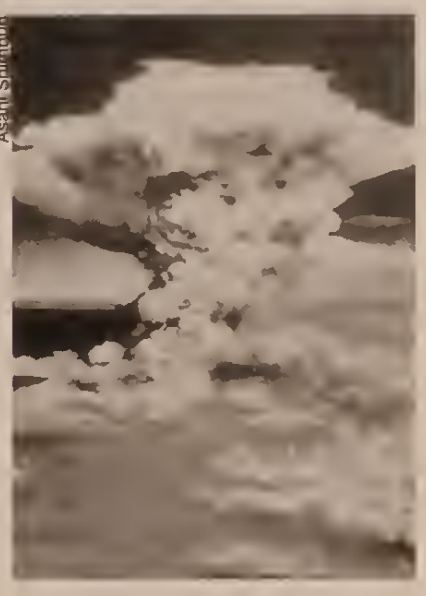
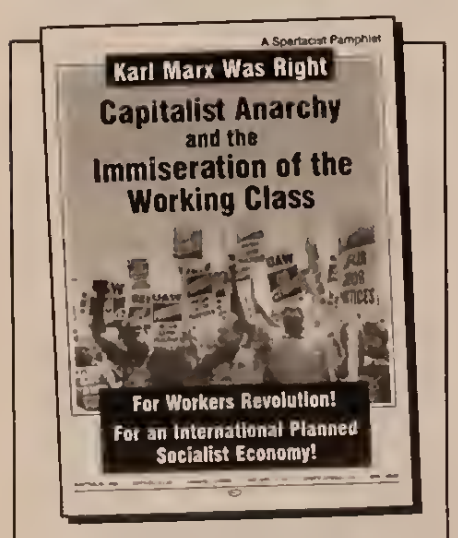
Copenhagen: Protest held to influence December 2009 UN climate talks.

Bettmann



Asahi Shimbun

Left: French and German soldiers slaughtered on World War I battlefield, 1918. Right: Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima by U.S., 6 August 1945. Interimperialist rivalry led to World Wars I and II.



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grossly oversimplify physical processes like the complex dynamics of water vapor. More fundamentally, the accompanying projections presuppose a static social reality. The predictions in the 2007 IPCC report are based on different "storylines" of growth and development. But any number of events could radically alter the story. A *Scientific American* (January 2010) article titled "Local Nuclear War, Global Suffering" concludes that in a conflict between, say, India and Pakistan, 100 nuclear bombs dropped on cities and industrial areas would produce enough smoke to blot out the sun and cripple global agriculture. This scenario pales in comparison to the threat posed by the massive nuclear arsenal in the hands of the U.S. imperialists. Just one *Ohio*-class American submarine can launch up to 192 independently targetable thermonuclear warheads.

Reuters

Costantini/NY Times

Capitalist decay: Homeless live in shadow of GM headquarters in Detroit (left); closed GM plant in Flint, Michigan (right).

The Ravages of Imperialism

Whatever the timetable and actual consequences of global warming, one thing is certain: in a world dominated by imperialist capitalism, the human toll—whether measured in famine, dislocation or disease—would overwhelmingly be borne by working people and the poor. The world's least developed countries, with woeful infrastructure and with the fewest resources available to adapt to new conditions, would be especially hard hit. The real culprit is not climate change as such but rather the world capitalist system, which imposes inhuman conditions on the semicolonial countries and deprives their population of the most elementary provisions, and not only for times of calamity.

Modern imperialism, marked by the export of capital, developed at the end of the 19th century, as the boundaries of the nation-state proved too narrow and confining to satisfy the capitalists' demand for new markets and sources of cheap labor. With blood and iron, the advanced countries essentially carved up the world into competing spheres of exploitation, a process described by V.I. Lenin in his classic work *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916). The imperialist powers embarked on a series of colonial conquests and wars, culminating in World Wars I and II, as each capitalist ruling class sought to further its interests at the expense of its rivals.

Along with exploiting the working class at home, the capitalist classes of North America, Europe and Japan exploit and oppress the downtrodden masses in Asia, Africa and Latin America, arresting the all-round social and economic development of the vast majority of humanity. Environmentalists cite more than four decades of drought and erratic rainfall in sub-Saharan Africa's Sahel region, which extends from the Atlantic Ocean to Sudan, as proof positive of the high price of climate change. Rapid desertification in the Sahel, where the population largely consists of pastoral nomads and peasant farmers, *has* exacerbated competition for land resources among the region's myriad ethnic groups. But the pushing of the Sahel deeper into poverty, starvation and misery is at bottom a man-made phenomenon—a byproduct of imperialist subjugation.

Out of the total land area in Africa, only a fraction is currently arable. The irrigation projects, drainage of swamps and cleaning of disease-infested areas that would be required to develop Africa's agricultural potential are unthinkable as long as the continent is squeezed in the vise of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. Africa is caught in the blind alley, inherited from colonialism, of concentrating its agriculture on tropical cash crops for sale on the world market to pay off usurious debt—accrued in large part to pay for massive quantities of food imports. The devastation of the African continent was greatly exacerbated by the destruction in 1991-92 of the Soviet degenerated workers state, removing the main counterweight to U.S. imperialism and cutting off a key source of aid for various Third World regimes.

As long as capitalism remains, it will continue to reproduce mass hunger and other scourges, such as epidemics of preventable disease resulting from the lack of sewers, clean water and other basic social infrastructure. Even if human-induced warming were somehow arrested under capitalism, imperialist depredation would continue unabated. Among other things, this renders billions of people vulnerable to "natural" climate change, variations in local weather patterns, "extreme weather events" like hurricanes, and other natural disasters. The January earthquake in Haiti is a case in point. The death toll of some 250,000 people was a product of over a century of imperialist oppression that left the desperately poor country totally exposed to the quake's impact, as shoddily built structures in Port-au-Prince simply collapsed. Today, some 1.5 million Haitians are still living in makeshift tents.

The struggle for the revolutionary overthrow of the decaying capitalist order is a matter of human survival. One small indication of the advantages of a collectivized economy over the capitalist system of production for profit is the success the Cuban deformed workers state has had in protecting its population from devastating hurricanes. In 2008, four hurricanes battered Haiti, killing some 800 people. Two of those storms also passed over Cuba, claiming a total of four lives. Despite the bureaucratic mismanagement of the economy and the country's relative poverty, deepened by over four decades of U.S. economic embargo, Cuba is well known for its efficient evacuation of citizens in the face of such disasters. The government provides early forecasting, educates and mobilizes the population and has arrangements in place for shelters, transport, food and medical backup.

Profiteering and Protectionism

Although many green radicals would describe themselves as anti-capitalist, all varieties of environmentalism are an expression of ***bourgeois*** ideology, offering fixes predicated on scarcity and class-divided society. Many environmentalists back market-driven "solutions" to global warming favored by capitalist governments the world over. The centerpiece is the "cap and trade" system that now covers the EU economies. Under this scheme, a generous limit is set on the amount of greenhouse gases firms can emit (the "cap"). Those that emit more than the cap must buy credits from others that emit less than they were allocated (the "trade"). At the end of the day, it is the working class that pays for this setup, in the first instance by way of higher energy and fuel costs, as it would also if a carbon tax were levied to make its "price" reflect its "social cost."

Alternately, companies can avoid cutting their own emissions by investing in "offsets"—projects elsewhere, often in poor countries, that purport to take greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere. One such project supplies poor rural families in India with human-powered treadle pumps for irrigating farmland, while another encourages Kenyans to use dung-powered generators. Tree-planting projects in Guatemala, Ecuador and Uganda have disrupted local water supplies, resulted in the eviction of thousands of villagers from their land and cheated them out of promised payments for upkeep of the trees. Western environmentalists might "offset" their liberal guilt over their comfortable lives by pushing such programs. But in the Third World, the end result is the reinforcement of mass impoverishment.

Cap-and-trade has become a new arena of capitalist profiteering. Some chemical companies, such as DuPont, have ramped up production of a particular refrigerant in order to make a bundle of "offset" money by incinerating the waste by-product HFC-23, a highly potent greenhouse gas. Carbon trading also promises a massive new speculators' playground for venture capitalists and investment banks, not unlike the one in mortgage-based securities that precipitated the implosion of the global economy. More than $130 billion changed hands in the global carbon market in 2009.

Environmentalism also goes hand in hand with national chauvinism, as seen, for example, in its embrace of trade protectionism. If the major players had come to terms at Copenhagen, a likely result would have been renewed protectionism. As Michael Levi noted in *Foreign Affairs* (September-October 2009): "The world has few useful options for enforcing commitments to slash emissions short of punitive trade sanctions or similarly unpalatable penalties." Indeed, environmental regulations have long served as a cover for tariffs, a practice ensconced in the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Historically, protectionism has fueled retaliatory trade wars, which have a way of turning into shooting wars.

Last year, the president of the European Commission threatened to slap tariffs on goods from the U.S. and other non-Kyoto Protocol nations to protect European business. Buried within a House version of a cap-and-trade bill drawn up by the Democrats is a provision for imposing duties against imports from countries that have not limited emissions as of 2020. The U.S. steel industry is already calling for sanctions against Chinese steelmakers if Beijing doesn't commit to carbon limits. Following suit, the chauvinist, anti-Communist United Steelworkers union bureaucracy has filed a case charging China with violating WTO rules by subsidizing exports of solar panels, wind turbines and other "clean energy" equipment. Promoting the lie that workers in each country are bound to their exploiters by common "national interests," protectionism is poison to international working-class solidarity.

Protectionism directed against Brazilian sugar cane ethanol importers and others is also a component part of the Obama administration's plan for U.S. "energy independence." As Obama has made clear by describing U.S. reliance on Near Eastern oil as its Achilles heel, "energy independence" is a rallying cry for improving U.S. imperialism's capacity to pursue its global military and economic ambitions through diversifying and strengthening control of energy sources.

It is no accident that groups like Greenpeace echo the call for "energy independence." The main political organizations of the environmentalists, the Green parties, are small-time capitalist parties hostile to the proletariat. In the U.S., the Greens act as a liberal pressure group on the Democratic Party, home to such environmental evangelists as Al Gore, who as Bill Clinton's vice president helped carry out starvation sanctions against Iraqis and the bombing of Serbia. In Germany, the Green Party was part of a capitalist coalition government with the Social Democratic Party from 1998 to 2005. During this time, German environmentalists commingled with the far right, whose anti-immigrant racism was echoed by the Greens in the name of combating overpopulation. Green foreign minister Joschka Fischer deployed the German military

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Fritz/McClatchy, Zuma/Newscom (inset)

Former British Petroleum CEO Lord Browne portrayed company as eco-friendly while slashing safety and maintenance costs, setting stage for April 20 Deepwater Horizon oil rig explosion that killed eleven workers and poured millions of barrels of oil into Gulf of Mexico.

France...

(continued from page 16)

threatened legal action against the French government. But the current deportations of Roma from France are only the most recent, and visible, manifestations of persecution of this minority by capitalist governments throughout Europe.

As recently as April, the German government initiated a plan to deport 10,000 Roma who had been living in the country for the past ten years to Kosovo, where unemployment is currently 45 percent. In July, Denmark summarily expelled a group of persons identified by Copenhagen's lord mayor as "criminal Roma." In 2008 in Italy, a wave of roundups and deportations of Roma was launched by Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who claimed the country was endangered by "irregular third-country citizens and nomads" (see "Italian Trotskyists Say: Mobilize Labor Power in Defense of Roma, Immigrants!" *WV* No. 922, 10 October 2008).

What triggered the European commission's expression of wrath was the recent disclosure that, contrary to government assurances that specific ethnic groups had not been targeted in France, a French Interior Ministry circular had in fact ordered evacuation of camps of Roma "as a priority." This led EU justice commissioner Viviane Reding to liken the focus on Roma communities to ethnic cleansing and to declare that it was "a situation that I had thought that Europe would not have to witness again after the Second World War."

Comparison of President Nicolas Sarkozy's deportations of Roma with deportations of Jews and Gypsies from France during World War II raises a touchy subject for the French bourgeoisie, which actively collaborated with the Nazis in the persecution of Jews and Gypsies. In fact, in the "free zone" of France not occupied by German forces, the quisling regime of Marshal Pétain in Vichy organized deportations to the concentration camps with as much zeal as the Nazis, if not more.

Sigot/Archives de la Résistance

Gypsies in Montreuil-Bellay internment camp, 1944. Some Gypsies remained interned by French authorities until May 1946, well after end of Nazi occupation of France.

In spite of the outcry and a resolution by the European Parliament demanding that France immediately suspend expulsions of Roma to Romania and Bulgaria, Paris is proceeding undeterred and keeps expelling Roma by the planeload. Minister of Immigration Eric Besson, formerly of the Socialist Party, insisted that suspending deportations was "out of the question." The government even plans to introduce a new draft law allowing expulsions of people guilty of "aggressive begging."

We print below a slightly adapted translation of an article datelined August 28 that appeared in *Le Bolchévik* No. 193 (September 2010), newspaper of the Ligue Trotskyste de France, section of the International Communist League.

* * *

On July 18 in Saint-Aignan [in the Loire Valley], Gypsies exploded in anger after cops killed Luigi Duquenet, a youth from their community. The government seized on the opportunity to literally declare open season on the Roma and unleash a racist campaign of unprecedented violence against the entire Gypsy, Roma and traveling population. Detachments of cops have attacked Roma encampments, violently destroying their meager possessions and deporting them massively to Romania. Every day we read of the government's vaunted successes in "eradicating" more encampments. 9,875 Roma were already deported last year to Romania and Bulgaria (*l'Humanité*, 29 July), accounting for a third of the deportations carried out in France that year. This year, as of August 25, more than 8,000 people have been deported so far (*l'Humanité*, 26 August).

The government went after the Roma and all Gypsies because this is the most vulnerable layer of the population, living partly on the margins of urban capitalist society. The workers movement has a direct interest in defending these oppressed people against the government's racist attacks. To accept these attacks against the Roma would directly open up the workers movement to the attempts to divide the working class itself along ethnic, racial or sexual lines, while also reinforcing the arsenal of police measures that target workers. *An injury to one is an injury to all!*

French Capitalism, the Reformists and the Gypsy People

The response by the Socialist Party, Communist Party (PCF), Left Party and New Anti-Capitalist Party to the government's racist campaign was to call (along with the Greens) for a demonstration on September 4. The call for the demonstration in *l'Humanité* (5 August) seized on the oppression of Roma to praise the French Republic, a capitalist-imperialist republic dripping with blood from Africa and the Near East to Indochina and, today, Afghanistan. The reformists want to refurbish France's image after the international outcry provoked by the roundup of Roma. The signatories also wanted to reaffirm their support for the capitalist order in the fight against "crime," implicitly echoing in passing the racist cliché that all Gypsies are thieves.

Lutte Ouvrière (LO) properly refused to sign this appeal, but they are notably close-mouthed about the expulsions carried out by the Communist Party in the towns where LO is part of a municipal majority headed by the PCF. For example, in Bagnolet [outside Paris] in July 2008, the municipal authorities demanded that Bulgarian Roma families send their children back to Bulgaria as the condition for granting housing to the adults.

The call for the September 4 demonstration declared that French president Sarkozy

> "is in no way fighting crime, which is reprehensible on the part of any individual regardless of nationality or origin.... It is no longer a matter of having a legitimate debate in a democracy about how to ensure safety in the Republic. Rather, the point is to stigmatize millions of people as dangerous based on their origins or their social situation.... The boundary being crossed makes us worry about the future for all of us—associa-

Global Warming...

(continued from page 13)

outside of its borders—for the first time since Hitler's Third Reich—to participate in U.S.-led wars against Serbia and Afghanistan.

The Rise of Green Capitalism

Environmentalism is not in the least antagonistic to production for private profit. A *New York Times* (21 April) article under the headline "At 40, Earth Day Is Now Big Business" commented: "So strong was the antibusiness sentiment for the first Earth Day in 1970 that organizers took no money from corporations and held teach-ins 'to challenge corporate and government leaders.' Forty years later, the day has turned into a premier marketing platform for selling a variety of goods and services, like office products, Greek yogurt and eco-dentistry."

There is more "green" rhetoric than ever emanating from corporate boardrooms. Reflecting competing interests in the American bourgeoisie, in 2009 a legion of big-name companies quit the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in protest over its policy of outright denial of global warming. Several major companies have opted to go "carbon neutral," such as Internet giant Google, which prides itself on building energy-efficient data centers and investing in corporate solar installations and wind farms.

The former CEO of British Petroleum (BP), Lord Browne, helped set the fashion in the mid 1990s by restyling gains in efficiency as emissions cuts and trumpeting them in press releases. At a time when his counterparts in the U.S. were pouring millions into the coffers of the "Global Climate Coalition," one of the most outspoken industry groups battling reductions in emissions, Browne anticipated a cornucopia of subsidies and tax breaks flowing from the emerging Western consensus to treat carbon emissions as a problem. He renamed his company "Beyond Petroleum" and adopted a new "environmentally conscious" logo as he went about transforming BP from a regional producer of petroleum into a global oil enterprise that also dabbled in "alternative" energy. All the while, BP was slashing costs by using cheap construction materials and cutting back on safety mechanisms on oil rigs, setting the stage for numerous "accidents" such as the blowout in April that took the lives of eleven workers and dumped millions of gallons of oil into the Gulf of Mexico (see "Gulf Coast Disaster: Capitalist Profit Drive Kills," *WV* No. 961, 2 July).

Drudge Report

Lee/Paramount

An inconvenient truth? Al Gore, user of private jet (left), lectures about cutting personal consumption.

While liberal environmentalists and the ISO reformists wag their fingers at BP for "greenwashing" its fossil fuel operations, Browne has, in fact, been something of a trendsetter for the "go green" movement. Media attention surrounding an energy consumption calculator placed on BP's Web site in 2005 helped popularize the notion of reducing individual "carbon footprints." The following year, Al Gore's documentary *An Inconvenient Truth* instructed people to abandon allegedly wasteful lifestyles by consuming less, using less hot water, changing incandescent light bulbs to CFLs at home and properly inflating their car tires. The London *Economist* (31 May 2007), a mouthpiece of finance capital, wryly observed, "Individual economic choices are not going to make a blind bit of difference to the future of the planet. Nobody is going to save a polar bear by turning off the lights." Gore's lectures about cutting consumption certainly haven't stopped him from enjoying the luxury of his Nashville mansion or his private jet.

"Doing more with less" is hardly an option for unemployed workers in the industrial wasteland of Detroit or the teeming masses housed in the enormous slums of Calcutta. Companies going "carbon neutral" will not improve conditions for workers on assembly lines, where the bosses threaten life and limb by speeding up production to extract the utmost profit. The use of "alternative" energy will not diminish the concentration of pollution in poor and working-class neighborhoods. The corporations producing energy will, however, be raking in the money.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.
Local Directory and Public Offices

Web site: www.icl-li.org • **E-mail address:** vanguard@tiac.net

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116, (212) 732-7860

Chicago ..... Box 6441, Main PO, Chicago, IL 60680, (312) 563-0441
chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net
Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m., 222 S. Morgan (Buzzer 23)

Los Angeles ..... Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta., Los Angeles, CA 90029, (213) 380-8239
slsycla@sbcglobal.net
Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m., 3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

New York ..... Box 3381, Church St. Sta., New York, NY 10008, (212) 267-1025
nysl@tiac.net
Public Office: 1st and 3rd Sat. of every month, 1-4 p.m., and by appointment, 299 Broadway, Suite 318

Oakland ..... Box 29497, Oakland, CA 94604, (510) 839-0851
slbayarea@sbcglobal.net
Public Office: Sat. 1-5 p.m., 1634 Telegraph, 3rd Floor

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

Toronto ..... Box 7198, Station A, Toronto, ON M5W 1X8, (416) 593-4138
spartcan@on.aibn.com

Vancouver ..... Box 2717, Main P.O., Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2, (604) 687-0353
trotskyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

tions, trade unions and supporters of various political organizations—who share an attachment to the fundamental principles of the secular, democratic and social Republic. We forcefully reaffirm that Article 1 of the Constitution 'ensures the equality of all citizens before the law, without distinction of origin, race or religion' and that all attempts to violate this fundamental rule of democracy undermine civil peace.... And we call for a mass citizens' demonstration on the 140th anniversary of the Republic, Saturday, September 4, at the Place de la République in Paris."

Isn't this the height of cynicism! Under the Third Republic [1870-1940], a law was passed in 1912 instituting "anthropomorphic identity booklets" for itinerants along with a collective registration booklet [enabling the authorities to keep track of their movements]; their vehicles were assigned special license plates to identify them as belonging to itinerants, the equivalent of the yellow star [that the Nazis forced Jews to wear]. (Fairground caravans

AP

Rome, September 9: Man leaves Gypsy camp before demolition by Italian authorities.

and vendors' wagons were exempted from this requirement if their operators were of French nationality.) The requirement to have one's identity booklet or vehicle registration booklet stamped four times a year remains in force for Gypsies today.

The Third Republic continually beefed up its arsenal against Gypsies. In April 1940 (before the German occupation), the government decided to place Gypsies under house arrest, in effect interning all itinerant people in small local concentration camps throughout the war. The repression carried out by the Vichy government against Gypsies (who were for the most part French citizens) was in fact based on laws enacted by the Third Republic, which was also the case for most of the measures taken against them by French police in the [German-controlled] Occupied Zone.

After the end of the German occupation of France, the PCF was in the government with the Socialists from 1944 to 1947. But some of the Gypsies had to wait until 1946 to be freed, with the last ones leaving the detention camps only in May 1946, a full year after the war in Europe ended.

Not all itinerants in France are Gypsies and not all Gypsies are itinerants. In the past few weeks, there have been demonstrations of communities of Gypsies carrying French flags to stress that they are French citizens and voters, as opposed to the Roma from East Europe and the Balkans who are the main focus of racist hatred and prejudice. But even French Gypsies who are not itinerant continue to be victims of racist discrimination. In Strasbourg, 200 Gypsy families live in the Polygone neighborhood, in a camp that was set up in 1970 and is still in dismal condition today. An elderly woman commented: "Our children go to school like any other children. But when they start looking for a job, and say that they live on Aeropostale Street, they are systematically rejected." And a Protestant minister added simply: "We are regarded as less than dogs" (*Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace*, 30 July).

Under the capitalist Third Republic, at the time of the Dreyfus Affair, some Jews also looked down on East European Jews fleeing pogroms—French Jews saw them as a threat to their own assimilation as French citizens. As it turned out, the French state sent thousands of Jews—citizens as well as foreigners—to the Nazi death camps under the Vichy regime. One of the overseers was Maurice Papon, who went on to have a long career in the capitalist state apparatus and who also happened to be the CEO of Sud-Aviation during the general strike of May 1968 [the factory where the strike started]. Workers and the oppressed have a vital interest in uniting in common struggle. The ruling class is trying to instill in immigrant workers the false consciousness that Roma threaten their own struggle for legal papers; they want French workers to think the Roma are "criminals." Fighting this false consciousness is the task of the revolutionary party.

The Roma: A People Without a State

Today 8 to 12 million Gypsies live in Europe; they are either itinerant or settled. Both Jews and Gypsies have a long, shared history of victimization and oppression. The Belgian Trotskyist Abram Leon, who died in Auschwitz in 1944, explained in *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation* [published posthumously in 1946] that the Jews were a "people-class." They survived as a distinct entity, not in spite of their centuries-old oppression but because they were initially a *caste* filling a specific and necessary economic role. Under feudalism, as money-lenders and traders, they necessarily lived in urbanized communities. Later, with the rise of industrial capitalism, the Jews' special commercial role came to an end and they assimilated into modern capitalist society. In Europe, the powerful workers movement took up the struggle against anti-Semitism. Many socialists and revolutionaries were of Jewish origin, including Karl Marx.

In the old days, Roma and Gypsies were mainly musicians, horse traders, basket makers or scissors sharpeners. Historically, they were an invaluable source of knowledge in the subsistence agriculture economy. However, as a "people-class" of itinerant craftsmen, their role in society remained more marginal than that of the Jews.

The 1917 Russian Revolution led by Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks, which established the dictatorship of the proletariat for the first time in history, successfully fought chauvinism and anti-Semitic pogroms based on its truly internationalist character. It also opened the way to the emancipation of the Roma, who were recognized as a minority for the first time. The creation of Romani dictionaries and grammars was promoted along with the Roma people's culture.

The year 1924 marked the beginning of a political counterrevolution led by the Stalinists, representing a layer of privileged bureaucrats, that would destroy the revolutionary Bolshevik Party. The poison of chauvinism was revived and nationalist tensions were used to break the workers' internationalist spirit. The

Getty

Nantes, September 4: Demonstrators against French government's racist immigration policies carry banner reading "Gypsies: Full-Fledged Citizens."

Romani language was soon suppressed, followed by Yiddish.

After World War II, the East European Stalinist regimes were able to partly restrain endemic prejudice but were not able to lay the basis for the elimination of chauvinism. In Romania, the particularly brutal Ceaucescu regime forced the Roma to become settled. However, today many Roma miss the Ceaucescu regime because the deformed workers state provided a job and an income for all. *Le Parisien* (23 August) quoted the typical remarks of an elderly Roma: "Before the 1989 revolution, under Ceaucescu, things were difficult but we managed. We had a place to live and a job, even if it did not pay well. And then, everything changed."

Twenty years ago, the International Communist League fought against capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and East Europe, while LO and the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire supported counterrevolutionary forces like Solidarność in Poland. In the struggle against capitalist reunification of Germany in 1989-90, we threw all our resources into fighting for a proletarian political revolution in East Germany to sweep away the Stalinist bureaucracy and establish the rule of workers councils. All the racist prejudices against the Roma resurfaced after the capitalist counterrevolution. There were massive layoffs of Roma, who had to take to the road again to flee poverty and racist terror. Capitalist restoration was so horrible that the Roma came to France in spite of the relentless oppression they face here.

On paper, Roma from Romania and Bulgaria have the right to travel throughout the European Union, including France. Theoretically, they also have the right to work. However, in France only 150 job categories are available to them—low-paying jobs that no one else wants to do. In addition, they have to pay high fees to obtain work permits and wait for weeks, even months, to receive them. The capitalists never want to wait so long to hire workers, so in effect, Roma do not have the right to work. Without an income, they also lose the right to stay in France longer than three months. *We demand: Lift all restrictions on employment for all those who have made it here, now! For full citizenship rights!*

The Roma's appalling situation in the European Union exposes the capitalists' hypocrisy regarding "freedom" and "democracy" for the oppressed in imperialist Europe. In the Czech Republic, according to Amnesty International (13 January), many Roma children are sent to special schools for "slightly mentally disabled children." In Italy, a so-called "emergency plan for itinerants" was adopted to fight crime, and thousands of Roma live under the threat of being evicted from their encampments and relocated in large, isolated camps. In Hungary, bloody pogroms have been reported. In Ostrovany (Slovakia) and in Tarlungeni (Romania), walls have been built to isolate Roma neighborhoods.

Racist terror is inherent to the capitalist system. The hideous oppression of the Roma people can begin to be solved only within the framework of a Socialist United States of Europe. As Abram Leon wrote in regard to the Jews in the conclusion of *The Jewish Question*:

> "Clearly, the tempo of the solution of the Jewish problem depends upon the general tempo of socialist construction. The opposition between assimilation and the national solution is an entirely relative one, the latter often being nothing but the prelude to the former.... Today, national-cultural and linguistic antagonisms are only manifestations of the economic antagonism created by capitalism. With the disappearance of capitalism, the national problem will lose all its acuteness. If it is premature to speak of a worldwide assimilation of peoples, it is nonetheless clear that a planned economy on a global scale will bring all the peoples of the world much closer to each other. But the hastening of this assimilation by artificial means would hardly seem to be indicated; nothing could do more harm. We still cannot foresee exactly what the 'offspring' of present Judaism will be; socialism will take care that the 'birth' will take place under the best possible conditions."■

Spartacist League/U.S. and Trotskyist League of Canada Forums

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

Labor Must Defend Immigrant and Black Rights

Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

NEW YORK CITY
Saturday
October 9, 5 p.m.
322 W. 48th Street
1st floor
(between 8th and 9th Avenues
take A, C or E to 42nd St.)
For more info: (212) 267-1025
nysl@iiac.net

BAY AREA
Saturday
October 9, 2 p.m.
Rockridge Library
5366 College Ave., Oakland
(5 blocks from Rockridge BART,
near Broadway)
For more info: (510) 839-0851
slbayarea@sbcglobal.net

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Down With Harper's War on Women's Rights!
For Free Abortion on Demand!

TORONTO
Saturday
Sept. 25, 7 p.m.
OISE (Ontario Institute for
Studies in Education)
252 Bloor St. West
Room 5170
(at St. George subway)
For more info: (416) 593-4138
spartcan@on.aibn.com

VANCOUVER
Saturday
Oct. 2, 1:30 p.m.
Roundhouse Community
Centre, Multimedia Room
181 Roundhouse Mews
(at Yaletown-Roundhouse
SkyTrain Station)
For more info: (604) 687-0353
trotskyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

WORKERS VANGUARD

No Reprisals Against Protesters!

Outrage Over LAPD Killing of Manuel Jamines

LOS ANGELES—On September 5 in L.A.'s Westlake area, cops from the notorious Rampart Division shot dead Manuel Jamines, a 37-year-old day laborer, point-blank in the head at six feet. The cop who fired the shots—witnesses report hearing three—is Frank Hernandez, the subject of a civil rights lawsuit pending in federal court for a previous shooting. An eyewitness said the impact of the bullets was so great that blood splattered across the street. Obscenely, the LAPD killing machine left Jamines' body handcuffed and lying in his own blood in the bustling shopping area of 6th and Union.

For several days, hundreds of Westlake residents courageously protested this killing. Chanting "Assassination! Assassination!" protesters faced down a massive show of force by the police, who subjected them and bystanders to tear gas and rubber bullets. Demonstrators, including families with children, were forced to flee down streets and into alleys. More than two dozen protesters have been arrested, some facing possible felony charges. At least two of those arrested are being held by the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.). The Partisan Defense Committee, a legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, sent a letter to the L.A. District Attorney demanding that "no charges be filed against the two dozen protesters arrested for voicing their justifiable outrage" and calling for "the immediate release of those detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement."

Gauthier/L.A. Times

Residents of heavily immigrant Westlake district express outrage over police killing of Manuel Jamines at September 8 community forum called by LAPD to contain anger.

L.A. Democratic Party mayor Antonio Villaraigosa immediately saluted the vicious killing as the act of police "heroes" who "acted with bravery." Police reports claimed that Jamines had threatened passersby with a knife and "lunged" at the cops. In spite of heavy cop intimidation, eyewitnesses have come forward to state that the victim had nothing in his hands when the police blew him away, only 40 seconds after encountering him. Jamines' brother-in-law, Tomas Gómez, captured the outrage of the community, "We are treated worse than animals. We are poor people and barely are bringing $100 to our families." He noted that Jamines "didn't speak either English or Spanish; we speak K'iche'. He didn't understand what they said and in a few seconds they killed him."

Manuel Jamines was a Mayan from Guatemala; his wife and three children live in a small village in the Solalá region. Several years ago, he had come north to look for work, like many in this impoverished immigrant neighborhood. Jobs have always been hard to come by for immigrant laborers in Southern California, but now in the "Great Recession" unemployment is especially high. To eke out a living many are forced to peddle wares on the streets, only to be viciously harassed by the cops.

The population of Westlake has long been subject to the notorious violence and corruption of the Rampart Division of the LAPD. In 2001, scores of cops from the division's anti-gang unit were

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No Deportations! For Full Citizenship Rights!

France: Down With Racist Anti-Roma Campaign!

Since July, the French government has been carrying out a witchhunt against the *gens du voyage* (literally "traveling people," the common French name for all Gypsies) and massively deporting Roma. As citizens of the European Union (EU), these Gypsies from Central Europe (coming in particular from Romania and Bulgaria) are supposed to have a legal right to travel and work in any EU country.

LE BOLCHEVIK

According to the French minister of the interior, the government has already destroyed 441 Gypsy encampments and expelled at least 1,000 Roma since the end of July. On September 4, at least 100,000 demonstrators rallied throughout France and some other European cities in liberal protests against this racist campaign.

These deportations are an aspect of multi-sided and brutal attacks on the working class and all the oppressed. In the framework of the worldwide economic crisis, capitalist governments throughout Europe are going after the living standards of their own working people in order to improve their competitive position against rival imperialists (see "Economic Crisis and the Capitalist State," *WV* Nos. 961 and 963, 2 July and 27 August 2010). At the same time, in every country the rulers offer up immigrants and minorities as scapegoats for rising unemployment, playing the old game of "divide and rule."

AFP

August 14: Roma in Montreuil, east of Paris, face riot police following expulsion from building.

On September 7, three million workers all over France participated in a day of strikes and demonstrations called by trade unions against the dismantling of retirement pensions. This massive turnout showed the proletariat's will to fight to defend its gains. But the workers are saddled with a treacherous reformist leadership that accepts the reactionary notion of a supposed "common interest" that the working class and the bosses have in safeguarding the profits of French capitalism. Such a leadership is incapable of leading a fight to defend the most oppressed sections of the population against the bourgeoisie and its government.

On September 14, the French parliament passed a law forbidding women to wear the face-covering Muslim *niqab* or *burqa* in public, and the next day it passed a law canceling subsidies to immigrant families if their children miss school. Earlier this year, a government official, lashing out at North African and African Muslims, even threatened to strip away the citizenship of any person of "foreign origin" accused of polygamy.

The singling out of the Roma as a specific ethnic group has been met with cynical protests by the United Nations and the EU. In August, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination urged France to "avoid" collective deportations. Meanwhile, the EU's justice and citizenship commission called the expulsions a "disgrace" and

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 966

8 October 2010

"War on Terror" Witchhunt

Protest FBI Raids on Leftists, Union Activists!

OCTOBER 5—In a series of dawn raids on September 24, FBI agents in Minneapolis and Chicago invaded seven homes and an office of leftists and labor activists. The Feds spent hours ransacking their homes, seizing cell phones and passports and carting away vanloads of boxes filled with personal papers, address books and computer disks. The activists were slapped with subpoenas to testify this month before a witchhunting grand jury. Subpoenas have also been served against individuals in North Carolina and Michigan. The government seeks to pin charges of "material support to terrorism" on the activists and others associated with them based on their political activities in solidarity with the oppressed in the Near East and Latin America. Today, an attorney for the activists announced that all 14 of those hit with subpoenas in the Midwest will refuse to testify before the grand jury in Chicago.

Most of the victims of the raids are well-known leftists. Jessica Sundin is a longtime antiwar activist in Minneapolis, a supporter of the Freedom Road Socialist Organization (FRSO) and member of the Anti-War Committee, whose office was also raided. Joe Iosbaker is a chief steward and executive board member of Service Employees International Union Local 73 at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he acts as an adviser to the Students for a Democratic Society. Mick Kelly is the editor of the FRSO's newspaper, *Fight Back!* Hatem Abudayyeh, a Palestinian American antiwar activist, is executive director of the Arab American Action Network.

It is vitally necessary for the labor movement to come to the defense of these activists and demand an end to the witchhunt. For decades, the capitalist rulers have sought to tar leftists as "terrorists"—i.e., people with no rights the state is bound to respect and to whom the government can do anything. The recent FBI raids open a sinister new front in that effort. Paving the Feds' way, a June 21 Supreme Court decision expanded what can legally be considered "material support to terrorism" to include a wide range of activities deemed as somehow aiding proscribed foreign organizations.

In a protest letter issued the day after the raids, the Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, denounced the Feds' attempt to chill the political activities of those who protest government policies at home and wars abroad. The letter stated: "From its inception under the Bush administration, the 'war on terror,' which initially victimized Arab and Muslim immigrants, set into motion repressive measures that also target leftists, trade unionists, and black people. Now the Obama administration is escalating these wholesale attacks on civil liberties with these neo-McCarthyite raids."

Velasquez/Chicago Tribune

FBI agents load possessions confiscated from home of antiwar activists in Chicago, September 24. Below: September 27 Minneapolis protest against FBI raids.

AP

The PDC and a number of other organizations have demanded that the subpoenas be withdrawn, that no charges be filed and that all belongings seized by the Feds be returned immediately. On September 27, the San Francisco Labor Council passed a resolution condemning the raids, and protest rallies have been held in cities across the country.

Almost to a man, liberal organizations and the reformist left had promoted the illusion that Barack Obama would represent some kind of "change" from the George W. Bush regime. But as we pointed out, what drove Obama's promises to clean up some of the Bush gang's most blatant "excesses" was his commitment to wage a ***more effective*** "war on terror." In office, Obama has embraced every one of the repressive tools handed down to him by Bush (and Bush's predecessor, Bill Clinton)—and then some: detention of "enemy combatants" at Guantánamo; domestic wiretapping by the National Security Agency; invocation of "state secrets" to quash lawsuits exposing U.S.-sponsored torture; kangaroo-court military commissions to try "terror" suspects; endorsement of indefinite detention, a hallmark of police-state regimes. While Bush broadened the FBI's legal authority to launch "terrorism" investigations based solely on one's political views, the Obama government has taken this a big step further with the concerted raids against leftists.

"War on Terror" Targets All of Us

The same day as the FBI raids, the leftwing National Lawyers Guild released a report titled "The Policing of Political Speech: Constraints on Mass Dissent in the U.S." that pointed to "a highly orchestrated curtailment of personal and political liberties" in the nine years since the September 11 terror attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. The report denounced the government's stigmatizing activists as terrorists and its use of "fear-based techniques against those who dare speak out against government policies."

The purpose of "anti-terror" witchhunts is...to instill terror in the population. The country's rulers fan fears of constant threat from the likes of Al Qaeda in order to garner popular support for (or acquiescence to) an immense expansion of police powers. As the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee argued in an *amici curiae* brief filed in July 2003 on behalf of Jose Padilla, a U.S. citizen seized and detained by the government as an "enemy combatant":

> "The 'war against terrorism' is a fiction, a political construct, not a military reality. It is a political crusade conducted in the name of ridding society of a perceived evil. It is no more a 'war' in a military sense than 'war against cancer,' 'war against obesity' or a 'war against immorality.' Like the 'war against communism' and the 'war against drugs,' this 'war' is a pretext to increase the state's police powers and repressive apparatus, constricting the democratic rights of the population."

It did not take long after the September

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Capitalism and Global Warming....6

Cuba and the Haiti Occupation

19 June 2010

Dear WV,

The rogue capitulation vis the Haiti earthquake aftermath had some consequences I'd like to address.

Without a thorough proletarian perspective, we missed the chance to sharply expose & explain the dual contradictory nature of the Cuban worker state bureaucracy & our strategic aims for the Caribbean region.

A tactical call on the Cubans to provide such relief as possible, given the limited resources of island socialism, was one option. That they did so is laudable—a measure of solidarity with the Haitian masses. This despite the more pressing concern to get the US out of Guantanamo Bay, which involves political will & objective military considerations. Of course, providing aid is far subordinate to political and/or military actions. This was not a case of say, the Soviets in Afghanistan.

On the other hand, Cuba's support to the UN & allowance of US military aircraft in their airspace are dangerous concessions to US imperialism. These threaten the very existence of the worker state & enable imperialist invasion of Haiti & should be condemned.

Relatedly, we did not explain our historic strategic position to Extend the Cuban Revolution & For a Socialist Federation of the Caribbean. This would require building Trotskyist parties throughout the region.

The Haitian diaspora need to be won to the ICL. We also could have called for trade union relief, which in the US, would have to be independent of the bosses, the UN & Obama's troops.

Respectfully,
AK

WV replies:

AK's letter raises useful points concerning elements of the Trotskyist program, particularly in regard to Cuba, that we gravely compromised by supporting the entry of U.S. troops into Haiti following the devastating earthquake, which the Obama White House presented as a "humanitarian" mission. In repudiating this betrayal of Marxist principle, we noted that "in failing to oppose the invasion, we also ignored the particular danger this posed to the Cuban deformed workers state" ("Repudiating Our Position on Haiti Earthquake—A Capitulation to U.S. Imperialism," *WV* No. 958, 7 May).

Key to our defense of Cuba against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution is our fight for proletarian political revolution against the nationalist Castroite regime. Following the Stalinist dogma of "building socialism in one country," the Cuban bureaucracy opposes the fight for proletarian revolution internationally, not least in the belly of the U.S. imperialist beast. The Stalinists' program undermines the necessary defense of Cuba against the imperialists, who seek nothing less than to smash the workers state and reestablish capitalist exploitation.

In regard to the Cuban bureaucracy's support to the United Nations, we would note that Havana has indeed repeatedly appealed to the UN, a den of imperialist thieves and their victims, as part of its pursuit of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. While sharply criticizing the sending of U.S. and other imperialist troops to Haiti in January, Fidel Castro called to "entrust the UN with the leading role that corresponds to it" (*Granma Internacional*, 25 January). The UN's "leading role" has been to enforce an imperialist occupation of Haiti under the guise of its MINUSTAH "stabilization mission," which was put in place by the U.S. and other imperialist forces in 2004. Criminally, the Chinese Stalinist regime helped prop up the occupation of Haiti by sending contingents of riot cops, both in 2004 and again after the earthquake.

As for the Cuban government granting the U.S. request to fly over its airspace in the aftermath of the quake, our article at the time (*WV* No. 951, 29 January) cited this decision as a justification for not opposing the occupation of Haiti, conflating aid with imperialist military intervention. This rationale was all the more twisted since Fidel Castro correctly denounced the U.S. intervention as an occupation. The initial agreement simply and unobjectionably allowed American military aircraft to temporarily transport medical evacuees through Cuban airspace on the way to Florida. The agreement was subsequently extended to also allow U.S. flights carrying "humanitarian relief supplies" to Haiti to fly over Cuba—a more elastic agreement. All the same, we are in no position to say that the Cuban government could have, or should have, rejected this request. It also bears mentioning that U.S. and other commercial airliners fly over Cuban airspace every day.

In "Haiti: Mass Misery Under Imperialist Occupation" (*WV* No. 962, 30 July), we described the intense repression carried out by MINUSTAH forces and demanded that all UN, U.S. and other military and police forces get out of Haiti. In that article, we noted: "Our perspective—for a workers and peasants government in Haiti as part of a socialist federation of the Caribbean—is inextricably linked to the fight for the revolutionary overthrow of U.S. imperialism." The key task is the building of Trotskyist parties in the U.S. and elsewhere as sections of a reforged Fourth International. ■

TROTSKY

LENIN

The Fight Against Capitalist Repression

In the name of the "war on terror," the government has massively reinforced its arsenal of police surveillance and terror in a wholesale assault on democratic rights. More than 80 years ago, Victor Serge, an anarcho-syndicalist who was won to communism under the impact of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, showed how the bourgeois legal system serves to protect capitalist rule against the workers and the oppressed. As Serge stressed, the proletariat must see the fight against the bourgeois rulers' attacks on democratic rights and other gains as a necessary part of its struggle against the capitalist order.

In every country, the workers' movement has had to win, in over half a century of struggle, the right to associate and the right to strike. Even in France this right is still not conceded to state employed workers nor those in industries considered to be of public utility (as if all industries aren't), such as the railways.

In the conflicts between capital and labor, the army has often intervened against labor—never against capital.

In court the defense of the poor is nothing short of impossible, because of the cost of any judicial action; in effect, a worker can neither bring a case nor defend one.

The overwhelming majority of crimes are directly caused by poverty and come into the category of attacks on property. The overwhelming majority of prison inmates are from the poor....

To respect legality such as this is to be fooled by it. Nonetheless, it would be equally disastrous to ignore it. The advantages for the workers' movement are the greater the less one is fooled. The right to exist and to act legally is, for the organizations of the proletariat, something which must constantly be re-won and extended....

We believe that in countries where the reaction has not yet triumphed, destroying the previous democratic constitution, the workers will have to fight to defend every inch of their legal position, and in other countries fight to regain it.

—Victor Serge, *What Every Revolutionary Should Know About State Repression* (1926)

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The closing date for news in this issue is October 5.

No. 966 **8 October 2010**

On Economy Article

6 September 2010

Editors,

I found the article in the latest *Workers Vanguard* "Economic Crisis and the Capitalist State" [*WV* No. 963, 27 August] well done and very informative. The entire capitalist world is in a debt crisis that would have any family ready to "sell the farm" and start bumming quarters on the corner. You quote an article from "The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2010 to 2020" that the Congressional Budget Office poses the eventual affect of the payment of interest of the debt to become 3.2 percent of the GDP. Though this fact is of concern for the economists of the world of greater concern and impact to the average working stiff would be the percent of interest paid from the U.S. Government revenue.

Thanks again for the article.

In solidarity and struggle
Charlie M.

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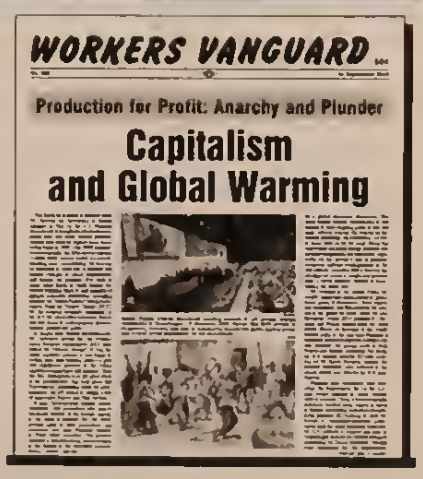

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Racist Scapegoating of Muslim Women

Down With Quebec's Niqab Ban!

We reprint the following article from Spartacist Canada *No. 165 (Summer 2010), newspaper of the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste, Canadian section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).*

SPARTACIST CANADA

Nadeau/Le Devoir, Globe and Mail (inset)

Woman in Hérouxville, Quebec, where edicts against Muslims in 2007 sparked wave of bigotry. Quebec Liberal government of Jean Charest (inset) aims to drive veiled Muslim women out of society.

The Catholic church anathematizes those who transgress its edicts. So too the Quebec government, the Canadian prime minister and the leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition [federal Liberal Party's Michael Ignatieff]. They have decreed that fully veiled Muslim women are anathema, to be denounced and hounded out of social life.

On March 9, 29-year-old Naema Ahmed was dragged out of a French language exam by an official from Quebec's immigration ministry because she refused to remove her *niqab*, a veil that covers most of the face. The young woman, an Egyptian immigrant, pharmacist and mother of three, had enrolled in this community centre class following her earlier expulsion from Cégep St. Laurent [a junior college] for the same reason. Again the authorities tracked her down. "I feel like the government is following me everywhere," she said. Soon after, a 25-year-old Indian immigrant, Aisha, fell victim to this xenophobic persecution, and was driven out of a French class by the same government department that put her there five months earlier.

On March 24, Jean Charest's Quebec Liberal government codified its racist drive against Muslim women with Bill 94. This law would ban women wearing the face-covering *niqab* or *burqa* from receiving *any* government services, and would bar them from all public-sector employment. This is a green light for racist abuse. Denied schooling, health care and perhaps even access to public transit and many other essential services, these women will become virtual prisoners in their homes—a Canadian version of purdah. While the number of women who would be impacted directly is small—at most a few dozen—the effects will be felt throughout the Muslim population and beyond.

There was a brief outcry in the English Canadian press against Bill 94, as bourgeois editorialists found it a convenient club with which to bash Quebec. The message, stated openly or implied, was that Quebec nationalism is uniquely intolerant, unlike the "multicultural" harmony that supposedly reigns elsewhere. Once Bill 94 was embraced by Conservative prime minister Stephen Harper and federal Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff these mostly hypocritical voices fell all but silent.

For over a decade, the capitalist ruling class has whipped up anti-Muslim racism, the domestic fuel of the "war on terror." This has seen countless frame-ups, detentions, people "rendered" to other countries to be tortured and a sustained assault on the rights of everyone. As an extension of the "war on terror," veiled Muslim women have been repeatedly scapegoated. In 2007, the all-party outcry against letting fully veiled Muslim women vote in federal elections without baring their faces was a gratuitous instance of racism. The impact of the rulers' demonizing of Muslims is shown by the broad support for the *niqab* ban: according to polls, 95 percent of Quebec residents support it, as do 80 percent across the country.

Bill 94 is cut of the same cloth as the laws being enacted in many European countries where the oppressed Muslim minority suffers the daily humiliations of racism, segregation and police violence. In Belgium, a bill which could become law this summer makes wearing full-face coverings in public spaces punishable by fines or jail. In an Italian city whose mayor is from the far-right Northern League, a woman was fined 500 euros for wearing a *burqa*. France has banned the *hijab* (headscarf) in schools since 2004, and in May the French parliament voted a resolution against full-face coverings.

We Marxists fight for the liberation of women, and thus oppose the veil, no matter what form it takes, as both a symbol and an instrument of women's oppression. We stand with the many women who seek to escape the cruel tyrannies of religious traditionalism, from the veil to the bride price and arranged marriage. But all these government bans and restrictions on the veil are racist and discriminatory against Muslims, and we unambiguously oppose them. The claims that banning the veil will foster women's equality or integrate Muslims into society are transparently false. The reality is that these bans mean the expulsions of Muslim girls and women from schools, universities and the workforce, deepening their isolation and oppression.

Down With Anti-Muslim Reaction!

The current state-sponsored persecution of Muslim women follows the 2007 wave of bigotry against young Muslim girls in Quebec that saw several driven out of sporting events because they wore the *hijab*. Bill 94 is the Charest government's answer to the question of how far "reasonable accommodation" of religious minorities should extend. To even pose the question in this way is to invite a racist backlash.

In pushing the *niqab* ban, the Liberals, the bourgeois-nationalist opposition Parti Québécois [PQ] and a range of bourgeois feminists say they are upholding secularism and women's rights. Quebec is easily the most secular part of Canada, a legacy of the struggles of the 1960s and early '70s that threw off the shackles of the Catholic church. The deep oppression of Québécois women was sharply undercut, and it was in Montreal during this period that Dr. Henry Morgentaler began his long and courageous battle to overturn Canada's reactionary abortion laws. But the forces pushing Bill 94 today are cynically manipulating the broad support for secularism and women's rights in Quebec to pursue reactionary aims.

Opposition to national oppression fuelled explosive class and social struggles in Quebec in the 1960s and '70s. Yet the outcome of these struggles was that the working class, lacking a revolutionary proletarian leadership, was drawn into the political framework of bourgeois Quebec nationalism. Like the "pro-Canada" chauvinism pushed by the labour tops and NDP [social-democratic New Democratic Party] in English Canada, such nationalism inevitably fosters racism against immigrants and ethnic minorities. Recognizing that the working class of this country is deeply split on national lines, undermining its ability to wage anti-capitalist class struggle, we Marxists advocate independence for Quebec. By taking the national question off the agenda, this would create far better conditions for the workers to see that their real enemies are their "own" respective capitalist exploiters—not the workers of the other nation or ethnic and racial minorities.

The ban on services to fully veiled Muslim women is the most recent face of the racist crusade to keep such minorities "in their place." It has absolutely nothing to do with the separation of church and state, which we Marxists uphold. We oppose state subsidies for churches through tax breaks, as well as all state funding of religious schools and religious instruction in the public schools. When there was a move in Ontario several years ago to give legal standing to Muslim *sharia* courts we sharply denounced this (see "No to Ontario's 'Sharia Courts'," *SC* No. 142, Fall 2004 [reprinted in *WV* No. 836, 12 November 2004]). But we are also against state interference in private religious practices, which the ruling class uses to whip up hatred against minorities.

For all their professed secularism, Quebec's bourgeois parties continue to uphold various sacred "traditions" of the Catholic church. After introducing the *niqab* ban, Liberal justice minister Kathleen Weil stated that "religious signs, such as a cross around the neck of state employees, are allowed because they do not cast doubt on the neutrality of the service offered" (Montreal *Gazette*, 25 March). The PQ, which claims to stand for "*laïcité tout court*" (pure secularism), voted with the Liberals to retain a giant crucifix in the National Assembly and supports the official recognition of Catholicism as Quebec's "historic heritage."

As for Québec Solidaire [QS], the petty-bourgeois party that is the darling of the reformist left, it too has endorsed the discriminatory and racist *niqab* ban. Asked for his reaction to the ban, QS's sole member of the National Assembly, Amir Khadir, told a March 25 press conference: "We are pretty much at ease with what has been announced yesterday for Quebec."

The danger to women's rights comes not from a tiny, vulnerable Muslim minority, but from the rule of the bourgeoisie, which upholds the reactionary institution of the family, the central force that oppresses women the world over. The family is the vehicle for transmitting property from one generation to the next, and the mechanism for raising new generations of workers. Bourgeois family law is thus tightly bound up with defense of private property, and women's inequality is always reflected in the legal and social codes of every society. Even in

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Spartacist League Forums

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

Labor Must Defend Immigrant and Black Rights

Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

NEW YORK CITY
Saturday
October 9, 5 p.m.
322 W. 48th Street
1st floor
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For more info: (212) 267-1025
nysl@tiac.net

BAY AREA
Saturday
October 9, 2 p.m.
Methodist Church
303 Hudson St., Oakland
(5 blocks from Rockridge BART at intersection of College Ave. and Manila Ave., enter on Manila Across from Rockridge Library.)
For more info: (510) 839-0851
slbayarea@sbcglobal.net

LOS ANGELES
Saturday
October 23, 3 p.m.
Mount Hollywood Congregational Church
4607 Prospect Ave.
(1 block east of Vermont, near Vermont-Sunset Red Line Station)
For more info: (213) 380-8239
slsycla@sbcglobal.net

FBI Raids...

(continued from page 1)

11 attacks for the government to demonstrate that its campaign for "national unity" against "terrorism" targeted a much wider swath than immigrants from Islamic countries, not least the labor movement. In December 2001, striking school teachers in New Jersey were pilloried as Taliban. The following year, Tom Ridge, then head of Homeland Security, personally intervened to warn West Coast longshoremen organized by the ILWU that any strike action would be treated as a threat to national security. Even such liberal pacifists as the Quakers and the Catholic Worker group have been spied upon in the "anti-terror" witchhunt, as documented in a report issued last month by the Justice Department's Inspector General.

The SL/PDC *amici* brief pointed out: "The Executive's declaration that its 'war against terrorism' forfeits constitutional protections for designated individuals echoes the regimes of shahs and colonels and presidents 'for life' from the Near East to Africa to Latin America, to justify the mass imprisonment and unmarked graves of political dissidents." The brief continued, "The Executive is proclaiming the *right to disappear* citizens of its choosing." Taking this "right" to its logical conclusion, the Obama administration earlier this year gave legal authority for the targeted assassination of a U.S. citizen living abroad—Muslim cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, who is accused of being an Al Qaeda operative and is believed to be hiding in Yemen.

How the "anti-terror" laws and other measures could be used for political witchhunts was on display in the police mobilizations that met protesters at the Republican and Democratic national conventions in 2004 and 2008. Civil disobedience and disruptions caused by a few anarchoid youth—trivial acts that used to be vindictively charged as "disorderly conduct"—were now defined as acts of terrorism. In the lead-up to the 2008 Republican National Convention (RNC), eight protest organizers were arrested on "terrorism" charges. Since then, charges have been dropped against three of the "RNC 8" and another has pleaded guilty to a lesser charge. While "terrorism" charges have been dropped against the remaining four, they still face trumped-up conspiracy charges that carry with them the threat of years in prison. With the trial for the four due to begin this month, we demand: Drop all charges against the RNC protesters!

While the country's rulers have a long history of harassing and criminalizing leftist dissent, the designation of political opponents as terrorists is a threat of greater magnitude. To be declared a terrorist is to be declared an individual outside of society, for whom democratic rights have no application and who the cops have license to gun down, or disappear, without any purported reason. In the 1960s, FBI head J. Edgar Hoover's declaration that the Black Panther Party constituted the "greatest threat to national security" gave police nationwide a green light to blow Panthers away. Thirty-eight Black Panther Party members were assassinated in the FBI's infamous COINTELPRO campaign and hundreds of others railroaded to prison. Begun in the 1950s, COINTELPRO was vastly expanded under Democrat Lyndon Johnson and his attorney general, Ramsey Clark (long a leading light in the Workers World Party's International Action Center).

Democrats, Republicans Criminalize Dissent

The government's prohibition of "material support to terrorism" originated with the 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act under Clinton and was expanded by Bush's USA Patriot Act. The law proscribes providing money, personnel, services or training to some 40 foreign organizations designated by the Secretary of State as terrorist.

One measure of the threat that "anti-terror" laws pose for the rights of the population as a whole can be seen in the case of leftist attorney Lynne Stewart. Along with her legal assistant Ahmed Abdel Sattar and translator Mohamed Yousry, Stewart was convicted in 2005 of frame-up charges of support to terrorism for her determined legal defense of blind Egyptian sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, who was imprisoned for an alleged plot to blow up New York City landmarks in the early 1990s. At stake in Stewart's case was the very right to legal representation. This July, Obama's Justice Department succeeded in pressing the courts to vindictively increase her sentence to ten years—a virtual death sentence for a 70-year-old woman who suffers from breast cancer.

The June Supreme Court ruling expanded what constitutes "material support" to include the exercise of the rights of speech and association, which are supposedly protected by the First Amendment. The ruling was in response to a case brought by the Humanitarian Law Project and other groups and individuals who wanted to advise the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) on how to appeal to the United Nations for peaceful resolution of their struggles. The LTTE and PKK had long been targets of the wars waged by the U.S.-supported Sri Lankan and Turkish governments against the oppressed Tamil and Kurdish national minorities.

The Court's decision essentially criminalized any activity that is considered as giving legitimacy to "terrorists." This could include anything from donating money to Muslim charities to interviewing a guerrilla fighter for the press (see "Supreme Court Decision Shreds First Amendment Rights," *WV* No. 961, 2 July). The secular nationalist LTTE and PKK had made it onto the State Department hit list because they fought a desperate struggle against regimes allied with the U.S.

In ruling against the Humanitarian Law Project, the Supreme Court declared outright: "Providing foreign terrorist groups with material support in any form also furthers terrorism by straining the United States' relationships with its allies." A mere three months later, the Feds launched their attack against leftist activists. Freedom Road, which cheered Obama's 2008 campaign, is hardly a radical leftist outfit. However, the FRSO and others became targets of government repression on the basis of their support to the guerrillas of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the secular-nationalist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Iranian-backed Hezbollah.

The FARC has been embroiled in a long struggle against Washington's Colombian puppet regime and its paramilitary death squads, who specialize in killing union activists. Some of the leftists targeted in the FBI raids have been active in the National Committee to Free Ricardo Palmera, a political prisoner in the U.S. who, as a leader of the FARC, was tracked down and arrested in Ecuador with the help of U.S. agents.

For the U.S. imperialists, who carry out mass terror in Afghanistan and elsewhere on a daily basis, the designation of "foreign terrorist organization" is elastic and constantly shifting. The last domestic "terrorism" witchhunt, under the Republican Reagan administration, was aimed at mobilizing the population for war against the Soviet Union. We wrote in "Why Reagan Needs 'Terrorism'," (*WV* No. 347, 3 February 1984): "For the bourgeoisie, 'terrorism' is violence associated with causes of which they disapprove, the use of force outside their own monopoly of violence: strikers defending their picket lines, black people protecting their communities against racist nightriders, Central American peasants fighting back against the landlords' army and hired killers."

Washington's terrorist designation has included the Irish Republican Army and Nelson Mandela's African National Congress during the reign of apartheid in South Africa. Included on today's list are the Basque nationalist ETA, the Communist Party of the Philippines and the Real IRA. Although the Islamic reactionaries of Al Qaeda are currently at the top of the U.S. hit list, when these forces were throwing acid in the faces of unveiled women in Afghanistan in the 1980s, the U.S. government hailed them as "freedom fighters" against the Soviet Union. The Soviet military intervention in that country had opened the road to the liberation of its horribly oppressed peoples, and particularly women. The Kremlin bureaucracy's treacherous withdrawal of

PDC Protests FBI Raids

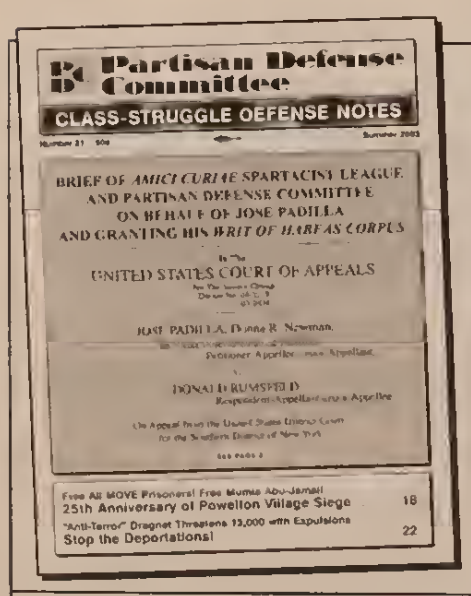
The following protest letter, addressed to U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, was issued by the Partisan Defense Committee on September 25.

The Partisan Defense Committee vehemently protests the FBI raids yesterday on the homes of numerous leftists and antiwar activists in Chicago and Minneapolis. Among the targeted activists are a chief union steward in the Service Employees International Union, prominent members of the Minnesota Anti-War Committee, the executive director of the Arab American Action Network, and supporters of the Freedom Road Socialist Organization and Students for a Democratic Society. FBI agents carted away boxloads of the activists' personal belongings, including computer drives and papers. Activists were also served with subpoenas to testify before federal grand juries investigating their activities in solidarity with the oppressed in the Middle East and Latin America.

This witchhunt is a blatant attack on the rights of free speech and association, and is intended to chill the First Amendment activities of anyone who would protest government policies at home and wars and depredations abroad. From its inception under the Bush administration, the "war on terror," which initially victimized Arab and Muslim immigrants, set into motion repressive measures that also target leftists, trade unionists, and black people. Now the Obama administration is escalating these wholesale attacks on civil liberties with these neo-McCarthyite raids.

We demand that the subpoenas be withdrawn, that there be no charges and that all belongings taken in Friday's raids be returned immediately. Stop the witchhunt! Hands off the activists!

Chicago Black Panther Party residence shot up in 1969 FBI/police raid that killed Fred Hampton, Mark Clark.

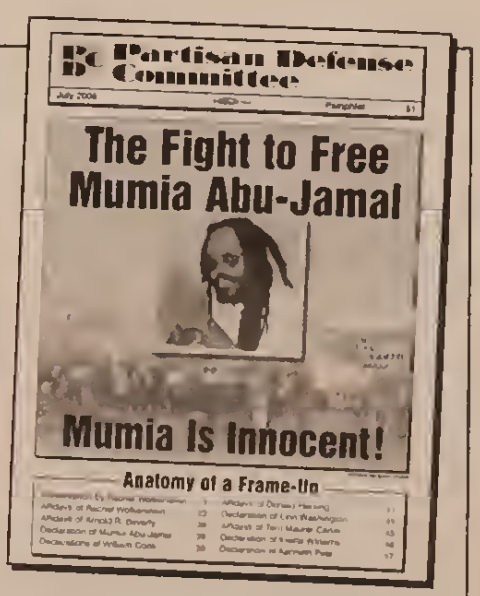


PDC Publications

Class-Struggle Defense Notes
No. 31, Summer 2003
50¢ (24 pages)

Marxists defend citizenship rights! This issue of *CSDN* reprints in its entirety the *amici curiae* (friends of the court) brief filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals by the PDC and the Spartacist League in defense of Jose Padilla.

PDC Pamphlet
July 2006
$1 (48 pages)



Order from/make checks payable to:
Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013

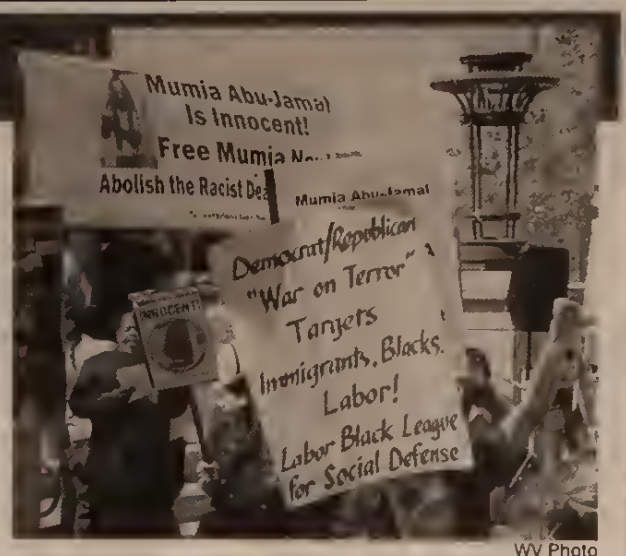
Join the Labor Black Leagues!

The Labor Black Leagues stand for mobilizing the masses of black and working people for militant integrated struggle against the brutal system of racist oppression that is capitalist America.

Initiated by and fraternally allied to the Spartacist League, a multiracial revolutionary Marxist organization, the Labor Black Leagues are part of the revolutionary movement of the workers and the oppressed against the bosses and for socialism.

Since they were brought to this country in chains and enslaved, black people have been an integral part of American class society while at the same time forcibly segregated at the bottom. It took the Civil War to emancipate black people from chattel slavery. But the Civil War was not carried to its completion, and black people were freed from slavery only to be stripped of political rights and economically subjugated. The civil rights movement, tied to pro-Democratic Party pressure politics and sold out by liberal reformism, failed to complete the unfinished business of the Civil War. We fight to win the entire working class, including white workers as well as the growing number of Latino and other immigrants, to the fight for black liberation, strategic to the American revolution. Black and working-class militants must stand for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and in their defense against racist and chauvinist anti-immigrant attacks. An injury to one is an injury to all!

The Labor Black Leagues raise the call: Finish the Civil War! Forward to a workers state! They base their perspectives on the realization that it will take a third American revolution, a workers revolution, to finally liberate black people.



WV Photo

Labor Black League denounces bipartisan "war on terror" at united-front protest for Mumia Abu-Jamal in Oakland, 19 April 2008.

If You Stand For —

1 Full rights for black people and for everyone else in jobs, housing and schools! Defeat the racist assault on affirmative action! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programs! For union hiring halls! Open up the universities to all—for open admissions, free tuition and a full living stipend for all students. Free, quality, integrated public education for all!

2 A fighting labor movement—picket lines mean don't cross! Defeat police scabherding and strikebreaking through mass pickets and union defense guards! For sit-down strikes against mass layoffs! Fight union-busting; keep the capitalist courts out of the unions! Organize the unorganized, unionize the South! Jobs for all—for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay with full cost-of-living escalator clause! Cops, prison guards and security guards out of the unions!

3 Fight for women's rights! Defend abortion clinics! Free abortion on demand; free, quality 24-hour childcare! Equal pay for equal work! For free, quality health care for all!

4 Full citizenship rights for all immigrants; everyone who made it into this country has the right to stay and live decently! Stop deportations! No to racist "English only" laws! Down with anti-Latino, anti-Semitic, anti-Arab and anti-Asian bigotry!

5 Defend the separation of church and state! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! Down with the anti-sex witchhunt—cops and courts out of the bedroom! Down with all laws against consensual activities such as "crimes without victims" like pornography, gambling, drugs and prostitution!

6 Mass labor/black/Latino mobilizations drawing on the power of the unions against the racist terrorists. Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

7 Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free all victims of racist capitalist repression! No faith in the capitalist courts! No to gun control! Defend victims of cop terror and racist police frame-up! No illusions in civilian review boards or community control of the police! Down with the racist and anti-labor "war on drugs"! For decriminalization of drugs! For class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense; support the work of the Partisan Defense Committee!

8 Unconditional opposition to every attempt to abolish welfare! Down with slave-labor, union-busting "workfare" schemes! Fight any and every attempt of the government to take away or cut back even more social programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, public health and aid to education and housing! For a massive program of public works—high-quality integrated housing, schools, libraries, hospitals for the working people and the poor!

9 Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! For international working-class solidarity! Support revolutionary struggles of working people abroad! Defend the deformed workers states—Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea—against capitalist restoration and imperialist attack! For proletarian political revolution to oust their Stalinist bureaucracies! For labor action against U.S. imperialist war moves and military adventures! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico! U.S. troops out of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean!

10 Down with the Democrats and Republicans! For a revolutionary workers party that champions the cause of all the oppressed! Finish the Civil War! Those who labor must rule! For a workers government to take industry away from its racist, incompetent and corrupt owners! Rebuild America on a socialist planned economy!

— Join the Labor Black Leagues!

Membership pledge: $3/year unemployed; $10/year employed. For more information:

CHICAGO.....(312) 563-0441
Labor Black Struggle League
Box 6938, Chicago, IL 60680

LOS ANGELES.....(213) 380-8239
Labor Black League for Social Defense
c/o Box 29574, Los Feliz Station
Los Angeles, CA 90029

NEW YORK.....(212) 267-1025
Labor Black League for Social Defense
Box 2502, Church St. Station
New York, NY 10008

OAKLAND.....(510) 839-0851
Labor Black League for Social Defense
Box 29497, Oakland, CA 94604
lblsdbayarea@sbcglobal.com

troops in 1988-89 allowed the *mujahedin* cutthroats to eventually take power, after which the likes of Osama bin Laden turned on their former U.S. paymasters.

The Workers Party Has a Right to Organize!

That Obama has stepped up Bush's attacks on civil liberties should come as no surprise. The Democrats' posture as the friend of labor and minorities makes them often more effective in carrying out attacks on the working class and the oppressed. It was Democrat Woodrow Wilson who ordered the arrest and imprisonment of members of the Industrial Workers of the World as well as Eugene Debs and members of his Socialist Party for their opposition to the interimperialist First World War. The Wilson administration also carried out the deportation of thousands of foreign-born radicals in the 1919 Palmer Raids, which came on the heels of the Bolshevik Revolution. It was liberal icon Franklin D. Roosevelt who interned 120,000 Japanese Americans in World War II and imprisoned 18 Trotskyists and Minneapolis Teamsters union leaders under the Smith Act for opposing U.S. imperialism's entry into the war. His successor, Harry Truman, carried out the Smith Act prosecutions of Communist Party members in the late 1940s.

Where before the government raised the spectre of communism, today it paints its witchhunt targets as "terrorists" and their supporters. In any case, the point of these campaigns is to strengthen the apparatus of the bourgeois state, which is a machinery of repression and violence against those the capitalists exploit and oppress.

In our fight to build a revolutionary workers party that will act as a tribune of the people, we Marxists are intransigent in our opposition to any infringement on democratic rights. In the mid 1980s, we successfully challenged the FBI's Domestic Security/Terrorism guidelines, which equated left-wing political activity with terrorism and organized crime. In announcing our suit against the FBI, we wrote in *WV* No. 340 (21 October 1983):

> "We are compelled to undertake this legal battle, not only to defend ourselves against the new FBI red-hunt but also to fight to preserve the existing democratic rights of the working-class movement. We do not intend to be blown away—faceless, nameless victims in the dead of night. As the organization which embodies the continuity of revolutionary Marxism in the U.S. today, our task is too important: the liberation of the workers and oppressed from the chains of this decaying, racist system through victorious socialist revolution. A Workers Party Has a Right to Organize!"

As a result of our lawsuit, the government conceded the central aim of our legal challenge—that Marxist advocacy cannot be equated with violence or criminal terrorism. The FBI changed its definition of the SL to one that describes what we are—"a Marxist political organization." Our suit struck a modest but genuine blow to the government's efforts to criminalize leftist political dissent. But, as we wrote when we announced the victory of our suit, "We have no illusions that the government's secret police have stopped or will stop their harassment, infiltration and disruption of Marxist political organizations and other perceived political opponents of the government" ("FBI Admits: Marxists Are Not Terrorists," *WV* No. 368, 7 December 1984).

A longstanding low level of class and social struggle has given the rulers a virtually free hand in implementing their attacks on democratic rights and the rights of labor. Bearing the lion's share of responsibility for this situation are the capitalists' lieutenants in the labor bureaucracy, who have acceded to wage cuts and union-busting while saluting the imperialists' "war on terror" in the name of "national unity."

As we have always insisted, the ultimate target of "anti-terror" and other measures of repression is the multiracial working class, which has the potential social power and class interest to be the gravediggers of the capitalist order. Short of the overthrow of capitalist rule, none of the rights and gains that working people hold dear are secure. The Spartacist League fights to build the vanguard workers party needed to lead the exploited and oppressed in a socialist revolution that sweeps away murderous capitalist-imperialism and establishes the rule of the working class.■

Mumia...

(continued from page 12)

against illusions that Mumia would get justice from the capitalist courts. What is needed is mass protest centered on the social power of the working class. When Mumia faced an August 1995 execution date, an outpouring of international protest, crucially including trade unions representing hundreds of thousands of workers, helped stay the executioner's hand.

In contrast, Workers World Party, Socialist Action and others in the reformist left place their reliance on the courts and politicians of the capitalist class enemy. Following years of subordinating the demand to free Mumia to the futile supplication for a new, "fair" trial, the reformists have more recently pinned their hopes on petitions to the summits of capitalist state power. A petition to Barack Obama grotesquely calls on the Commander-in-Chief of U.S. imperialism, who has made clear his support for capital punishment, to "speak out against the death penalty for Mumia Abu-Jamal." A petition to his top cop, Attorney General Eric Holder, pleads, "Inasmuch as there is no other court to which Abu-Jamal can appeal for justice, we turn to you for remedy" and begs for a civil rights investigation—to be carried out by the same Justice Department whose job is to oversee the capitalists' frame-up machinery.

In our protests and propaganda, we have sought to imbue militants with the understanding that the fight to free Mumia must be based on working-class struggle against the capitalist rulers and their state. This necessarily includes fighting to abolish the racist death penalty—the legacy of chattel slavery in the U.S.—which stands at the pinnacle of the apparatus of repression wielded by the capitalists against the masses they exploit and oppress. Only when the multiracial proletariat, led by a vanguard party, seizes power through socialist revolution will there be an end to the murderous repression, exploitation and racial oppression that define the capitalist system. ***Free Mumia! Abolish the racist death penalty!***■

Capitalism and Global Warming

This part concludes this article, Part One of which appeared in WV *No. 965 (24 September).*

PART TWO

Attempts to rationally utilize the world's resources and protect against large-scale environmental degradation run straight into the anarchy of production under capitalism, which is based on the private ownership of the means of production—factories, technology, land, etc. However well-organized individual plants may be, there is no plan in the broader economy. Investment decisions, including for research and development, are primarily driven by the profit motive.

Friedrich Engels, who with Karl Marx founded modern, scientific socialism, observed in his unfinished 1876 essay "The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man":

> "As long as the individual manufacturer or merchant sells a manufactured or purchased commodity with the usual coveted profit, he is satisfied and does not concern himself with what afterwards becomes of the commodity and its purchasers. The same thing applies to the natural effects of the same actions. What cared the Spanish planters in Cuba, who burned down forests on the slopes of the mountains and obtained from the ashes sufficient fertiliser for *one* generation of very highly profitable coffee trees—what cared they that the heavy tropical rainfall afterwards washed away the unprotected upper stratum of the soil, leaving behind only bare rock! In relation to nature, as to society, the present mode of production is predominantly concerned only about the immediate, the most tangible result."

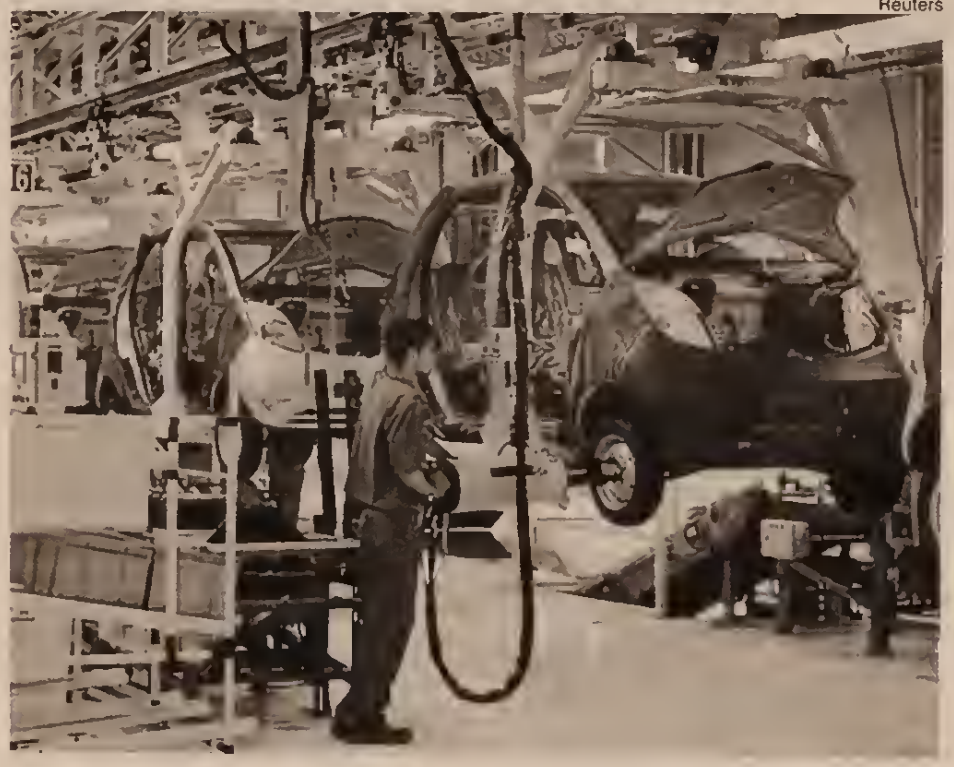
Why, then, do many bourgeois spokesmen raise concerns about the environment? For one thing, an individual capitalist will worry when pollutants from an industrial process are shown to impact his own well-being, and not just that of his wage slaves. More broadly, an increasing number of the capitalists' political representatives express alarm at global warming because of the economic and social disruption it threatens. A *New York Times* (9 August 2009) article titled "Climate Change Seen as Threat to U.S. Security" cites military and intelligence analysts who raise the prospect of "military intervention to deal with the effects of violent storms, drought, mass migration and pandemics" in coming decades. The Pentagon already is making plans for securing its low-lying installations and fortifying the borders to keep refugees out. Its talk of safeguarding U.S. interests is a recipe for more imperialist interventions like the occupation of Haiti, disguised as "disaster relief," following the January earthquake.

On the left, those who despair of the prospect of proletarian socialist revolution are left with nothing but their own doomsday scenarios and impotent reform strategies. In *New Left Review* (January-February 2010), Mike Davis writes off a "global revolution" as "an utterly unrealistic scenario," resigning himself to an impending ecological catastrophe. Davis opines: "Instead of galvanizing heroic innovation and international cooperation, growing environmental and socio-economic turbulence may simply drive elite publics into more frenzied attempts to wall themselves off from the rest of humanity.... The goal would be the creation of green and gated oases of permanent affluence on an otherwise stricken planet."

Widely touted "eco-socialist" John Bellamy Foster goes to great lengths to twist Karl Marx into a proto-environmentalist, stripping Marxism of its revolutionary content. In *Monthly Review* (January 2010), Bellamy talks of a "new environmental proletariat" consisting of small peasants, unemployed slum-dwellers and others in the Third World "directly in line to be hit first by the impending disasters" as "the main historic agent and initiator of a new epoch of ecological revolution." This notion has distinct roots in the 1960s New Left, which rejected the unique capacity of the working class—in both the advanced countries and in the neocolonial world—to overturn the capitalist order and collectivize the means of production. Following the demise of the New Left, a number of radical activists made their peace with the imperialists by embracing one or another variety of green politics.

There is indeed a proletariat in the areas addressed by Bellamy—the workers who toil in South Africa's platinum mines, India's auto assembly lines and Brazil's aircraft manufacturing plants. As in the advanced capitalist countries, what's lacking are revolutionary workers parties to mobilize that social power at the head of the dispossessed urban and rural masses in socialist revolution.

Noorani/Still Pictures



Reuters

Dhaka slum hit by one of cyclical floods that batter Bangladesh. Below: Worker at Tata Motors plant in India, where industrial proletariat has grown significantly in recent years.

Pro-Capitalist "System Change"

For its part, the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO) criticizes certain environmentalist nostrums, such as reducing individual "carbon footprints," while joining liberals and Greens in appealing to capitalist governments to enforce eco-friendly practices. In "Hothouse Earth" (*International Socialist Review*, March-April 2009), the ISO proposes a "government action plan on the environment" that largely consists of advice to the Obama administration on investment in non-fossil-fuel energy sources. Mirroring the petty-bourgeois prejudices that define the environmentalist movement, the ISO opposes nuclear power and blames "*unregulated* free-market capitalism" (our emphasis) for the ruination of the environment. These positions do not come as a surprise, as the ISO has run candidates on the bourgeois Green Party ticket in recent years.

The statement in "Hothouse Earth" that "only a socialist future holds out the hope of a sustainable one for the planet" is so much window dressing for the article's operational conclusion: "There is still a great deal of hope in Obama and expectation for change that can be channeled into a movement to pressure him to go significantly beyond his campaign promises." Similarly, the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) opined in a 25 May 2008 article on a Congressional climate bill: "Without a mass, militant movement to stop global warming, all the politicians will offer up will be half-measures that assure the continued flow of profit into the polluters' coffers."

The reformists got their "movement" outside the Copenhagen UN climate talks last December, when tens of thousands rallied under the call for "System change, not climate change" and similar demands. Trumpeted by Climate Justice Action (CJA), the ISO and others, that slogan can mean many different things. For the CJA, an international network of environmental groups, the intended "change" is limiting economic growth and "leaving fossil fuels in the ground." Environmentalists of varying stripes have long argued that humanity is exceeding, or soon will exceed, the "carrying capacity" of the earth. From their perspective, there are too many people inhabiting the planet with far too many possessions. Invariably, the environmentalists' proposals to limit consumption and cut back production

For Socialist Revolution!
For an Internationally Planned Economy!

dovetail with capitalist austerity measures against the working class and poor in both the industrial centers and the backward countries.

The main effect of the mobilization in Copenhagen was to implore the "democratic" imperialists to speed the pace of negotiations about emissions reduction, as seen in such signs as "Bla, Bla, Bla. Act Now," "There Is No Planet B," and "The World Wants a Real Deal." Above all, hopes were placed on U.S. imperialist Commander-in-Chief Barack Obama, whose sermons on the problems that global warming poses for human beings coincide with his escalation of the murderous occupation of Afghanistan, the projection of military power globally and an expansion of attacks on democratic rights at home in the name of the "war on terror."

In the lead-up to Copenhagen, the ISO, who cheered Obama's ascension to the White House, bleated in a *Socialist Worker* article (2 July 2009) on the House cap-and-trade bill: "If all he hears is the sound of corporate dollars cascading into Democratic coffers, it's clear that the earth and human, animal and plant life will come a distant second to considerations of corporate profit." Like the PSL and the rest of the reformist left, the ISO propounds the myth that the fundamental priorities of the capitalist rulers can be altered to serve the interests of the exploited and the oppressed if sufficient pressure is exerted on the more liberal wing of the bourgeoisie, represented in the U.S. by the Democratic Party. However much, or little, they refer to socialism, the effect of the reformists' political activity was aptly characterized by Trotsky in *Lessons of October* (1924) as the "training of the masses to become imbued with the inviolability of the bourgeois state."

Population Growth and Malthus

To one degree or another, almost all environmentalists identify population growth as a primary cause of environmental degradation. Robert Engelman of the Worldwatch Institute gave one such opinion in a special edition of *Scientific American* (June 2009): "In an era of changing climate and sinking economies, Malthusian limits to growth are back—and squeezing us painfully. Whereas *more people* once meant more ingenuity, more talent and more innovation, today it just seems to mean *less for each*" (emphasis in original).

This perspective turns the problem on its head. It is a fact that the world's population has increased from 3 billion in 1960 to 6.5 billion in 2005 and is projected to top seven billion next year. The rapid rate of population growth magnifies problems endemic to the capitalist mode of production, from poverty and starvation to environmental degradation, but it is *not* the cause of these ills. For example, food output today is more than one and a half times what is needed to provide every person on the planet with a nutritious diet, according to the UN World Food Programme. However, capitalists manipulate the world market for food to accumulate as much profit as possible, not to feed the hungry.

The classic case of blaming the impoverished masses for scarcity was put forward by Thomas Malthus. A parson of the Church of England, Malthus advanced two propositions in his 1798 tract, *An Essay on the Principle of Population*: unchecked population increases in a geometrical ratio while subsistence increases in an arithmetical ratio. The two propositions together constitute his principle of population, which concluded that the growth in mankind would outstrip the world's resources, from which all misery and vice flowed.

By this argument, Malthusians deflect blame for mass impoverishment away from the existing class-divided social order. Malthus' theory was an integral part of the ideological counteroffensive against the French Revolution. Not only the feudal aristocracy throughout Europe but also the English bourgeoisie feared that their own "lower classes" would embrace the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity. Malthusianism was an attempt to prove the inevitability of privation for the toiling masses in order to divert them from any social struggle to better their lot.

Marx and Engels scathingly demolished Malthus' theory, which Engels characterized as "the most open declaration of war of the bourgeoisie upon the proletariat" (*The Condition of the Working-Class in England*, 1845). Malthus was projecting as everlasting truths the specific relations of exploitation that obtained at that time between wage-earners and capitalists, as well as the antagonisms between the landed aristocracy and urban bourgeoisie. Marx showed that the poverty of the working class was based in the appropriation of surplus value extracted from wage laborers (the proletariat) by the capitalists, who own the means of production. What is required to end the misery and privation of the working masses is the expropriation of the means of production by the proletariat and the qualitative expansion of the productive forces that would come about in a collectivized economy. The technological revolution of 19th-century Europe was itself a dramatic refutation of Malthusianism, demonstrating the capacity to qualitatively expand the means of subsistence.

Marxists are by no means indifferent to the problem of rapid population growth.

Bettmann

Dietz Verlag Berlin

Left: Thomas Robert Malthus' reactionary theory of overpopulation blamed the poor for their poverty. Right: Friedrich Engels, cofounder of scientific socialism, denounced Malthus' theory as "declaration of war" on the proletariat.

Dr. Barry Brooks

Integral Fast Reactor (IFR) developed at Argonne National Laboratory, Illinois. IFRs increase efficiency in fuel use, significantly lessen problems associated with reactor safety and nuclear waste.

But we understand that only a society that can raise the standard of living worldwide can provide the conditions for a natural decline in reproductive rates. Advanced capitalist countries that have experienced rising living standards have generally seen a drop in fertility rates—the number of children an average woman will have during her childbearing years—sometimes dramatically so. With the advent of industrialization, fertility rates fell sharply, first in France, then in Britain, followed by much of Europe and the U.S. By the 1970s, 24 countries had fertility rates of 2.1 or less, the level at which population is stabilized.

But such advances are limited in a world dominated by imperialism, in which billions live under unbearably harsh conditions. Imperialist oppression also reinforces reactionary religious obscurantism and the brutal oppression of women around the planet. During the anti-Soviet Cold War, for example, the U.S. consciously fostered Islamic fundamentalist forces as a bulwark against both "godless Communism" and secular nationalism. In 1950, John Foster Dulles, who went on to become Secretary of State three years later, declared: "The religions of the East are deeply rooted and have many precious values. Their spiritual beliefs cannot be reconciled with Communist atheism and materialism. That creates a common bond between us."

The bourgeoisies of backward countries likewise rely on religion and superstition to solidify their rule, such as the Indian government's fueling of Hindu chauvinism. Meanwhile, in its vicious medieval stand against abortion and its proscription of birth control, the Catholic church, which holds sway over more than one billion people, is a major contributor to population growth. The U.S., for its part, is second to none among advanced capitalist countries in the prevalence of religious belief.

We observed in "In Defense of Science and Technology—An Exchange on Eco-Radicals and HIV Denialists" (*WV* No. 843, 4 March 2005):

> "Communist society will be based on a thoroughly different set of social values from those that exist today. The liberation of women from patriarchal domination will mean complete and unhindered access to birth control and contraception. Communism will elevate the standard of life for everyone to the highest possible level. By eliminating scarcity, poverty and want, communism will also eliminate the greatest driving force for the prevalence of religion and superstition—and the attendant backwardness, which defines the role of women as the producers of the next generation of working masses to be exploited."

Under communism, human beings will have far greater mastery over their natural and social environments. Both the division between town and country and economic dependence on the family will be overcome. The time when people were compelled to have more children in order to ensure enough manpower to work the land or to care for the elderly will have long passed. As Engels wrote in an 1881 letter to Karl Kautsky:

> "The abstract possibility that mankind will increase numerically to such an extent that its propagation will have to be kept within bounds does, of course, exist. But should communist society ever find itself compelled to regulate the production of humans in the same way as it has already regulated the production of things, then it, and it alone, will be able to effect this without difficulty."

Capitalism, Technology and Energy Production

It is common for "anti-capitalist" eco-radicals, who are appalled by the ruining of the environment by corporations, to put an equal sign between capitalism and technology. In that view, capitalism is conflated with the consumption of goods, including life's necessities. "Deep ecologists" and other primitivists take environmentalist ideology to its logical conclusion: opposing industry and civilization in the name of protecting the rest of nature from humans. Such a vision could be achieved in practice only by the deaths of billions of people. In "The Agrarian Question and the 'Critics of Marx'" (1901), a polemic against the Russian neo-Malthusian "Legal Marxist" Sergei Bulgakov, V. I. Lenin observed:

> "Our age was not preceded by a Golden Age; and primitive man was absolutely crushed by the burden of existence, by the difficulties of the struggle against Nature. The introduction of machinery and of improved methods of production immeasurably eased man's struggle against Nature generally, and the production of food in particular. It has not become more difficult to produce food; it has become more difficult for the workers to obtain it because capitalist development has inflated ground-rent and the price of land, has concentrated agriculture in the hands of large and small capitalists, and, to a still larger extent, has concentrated machinery, implements, and money, without which successful production is impossible."

In its early development, capitalism gave birth to modern science and the industrial revolution, which was sparked by the discovery and use of coal in steam engines. The combination of steam power and machine technology soon qualitatively transformed production, as individual artisans were displaced by wage laborers working collectively in large plants. At the same time, the private ownership of the means of production increasingly became a fetter on the further development of the productive forces.

continued on page 8

International Communist League pamphlet comprising three articles from ICL press: "The Development and Extension of Leon Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution," "A Trotskyist Critique of Germany 1923 and the Cominlern" and "Down With Executive Offices of the Capitalist State!" These articles together constitute an introduction to the historically founded principles and program of Trotskyism (i.e., genuine Marxism).

$2 (56 pages)

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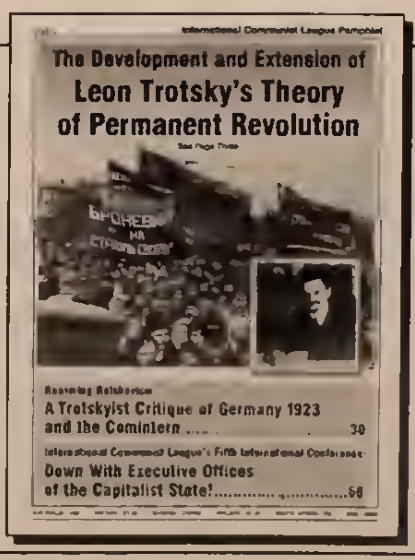

Global Warming...

(continued from page 7)

Expanding production required the augmentation of energy resources, first coal and later, increasingly, petroleum. Today four of the six most profitable companies in the world are in the oil business, which alone supplies more than one-third of the world's energy. Trillions of dollars are invested worldwide in infrastructure related to oil and gas production and refining. Other oil by-products, such as asphalt, rubber and plastics, also play a vital role in industrial economies.

The capitalist magnates and their governments are not about to just write off their historic investments in fossil fuels. Neither would a workers government. While a planned, collectivized economy would carry out scientific research to develop safer, more efficient sources of energy, it may well have to run for some time on coal and hydrocarbons (oil and natural gas). As stated in "Eco-Faddism and Nuclear Power" (*Young Spartacus* No. 55, June 1977): "Marxists are not insensitive to the environmental aspects of technological progress. But our concern is tempered by our dedication to the scientific eradication of scarcity and human misery. The victorious proletarian revolution will utilize science and technology to provide the material basis for overcoming the 'human condition' of war, poverty and privation—the hallmarks of class society."

Leon Trotsky, co-leader with Lenin of the 1917 October Revolution, captured the contradiction posed by technological development under capitalism when he wrote:

> "Technology and science have their own logic—the logic of the cognition of nature and the mastering of it in the interests of man. But technology and science develop not in a vacuum but in human society, which consists of classes. The ruling class, the possessing class, controls technology and through it controls nature. Technology in itself cannot be called either militaristic or pacifistic. In a society in which the ruling class is militaristic, technology is in the service of militarism."
>
> —"Radio, Science, Technology, and Society," March 1926

We defend the gains of science and technology made under capitalism and understand that a socialist society would build on those advances. Today, the application of that technology is bound up with the bourgeoisie's pursuit of profit. Even the best-understood technologies are implemented dangerously and at great social cost, intended or not. April's Gulf Coast disaster, which killed eleven workers, was evidence of the fact that the energy sector is one of the most hazardous for workers, as sound safety practices are thrown out the window. Although solar and wind power installations do not require any resource extraction, these small-scale industries have nevertheless also claimed lives. Throughout industry, we fight for union control of working conditions and, where there are specific hazards, actions to shut down operations. This requires a concerted effort to organize the growing number of non-union companies and contractors.

Arkady Shaikhet

Novosti

Right: Dnieper River hydroelectric station completed in 1932 under Soviet planned economy. Inset: Russian village receives electricity, 1926.

Revolutionary Marxists have no interest in advising the bourgeoisie on how best to meet its energy needs. We will worry about how best to power the planet when the international proletariat runs it. Only then can the advisability of using one or another technology be properly evaluated. We recognize that there are problems associated with all types of energy production, such as that based on coal. Depending on its grade, coal can be over 90 percent pure carbon. Coal also has a lower heat content than natural gas (methane). As a result, the combustion of coal produces more carbon dioxide per unit of energy than gas. But to argue today, in a society driven by the profit motive, that one source of energy is inherently safer, or more sensible, than another is a recipe for disaster. Consider:

- In 2008, the U.S. corn ethanol biofuels racket provoked a shortfall in the food grain harvest, helping to trigger a food crisis crushing the world's poor at a time of booming global agricultural output.
- Even as a growing number of coal-burning plants around the nation have moved to reduce their air pollution, many of them are dumping the toxic waste into water supplies. Each day since one plant 40 miles outside of Pittsburgh installed scrubbing technology in its chimneys to trap pollutants in June, it has poured tens of thousands of gallons of chemical wastewater into a nearby river that provides drinking water to 350,000 people.
- Amid an uneven march toward new nuclear power plant construction in the U.S., owners of the earliest plants have applied for licenses to continue operations for as long as 40 years beyond the designed life span of their reactors.

Environmentalists historically have denounced nuclear energy, although some now consider it a possible substitute for fossil fuel use, especially with the advent of integral fast reactors (IFRs), which are designed to generate less waste and to be less prone to meltdown. We oppose the green campaign against nuclear power, without endorsing the policies and activities of the reactor owners or the government agencies regulating them. While the planet contains a finite amount of uranium, new breeder reactors, such as the IFR, would use less than 1 percent of the uranium currently consumed by light-water reactors. There is also the possibility of the future development of technology to harness nuclear fusion for energy production.

All of this is not to deny the real, long-unresolved safety risks connected with nuclear reactors, particularly the disposal of wastes. Yet huge amounts of nuclear wastes are also by-products of military use. The vast nuclear arsenal in the hands of the U.S. and other imperialists poses a far greater danger to humanity than does an accidental leakage from nuclear plants or wastes. The U.S. is the only country to have used the A-bomb, incinerating hundreds of thousands in the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945.

Defend the Chinese Workers State!

The superiority of a planned economy was demonstrated by the experience of the Soviet Union. The Bolshevik-led 1917 Russian Revolution broke capitalist rule and established proletarian property forms, setting the stage for a qualitative improvement in the well-being of the working masses unobtainable in countries that remained chained by imperialist domination. In the USSR, all were provided with housing, health care, education and jobs. Even in isolation and despite the degeneration of the workers state under the Stalinist bureaucracy beginning in 1923-24, the Soviet Union was transformed from a backward, overwhelmingly peasant society into a modern industrial power. In 1925, the Soviet Union was the world's eleventh-largest producer of electrical energy. In 1935, it stood third behind Germany and the U.S. During World War II, the Soviets were able within the space of a year to move and rebuild industries destroyed by the Nazi invasion.

However, the Stalinist bureaucracy fatally undermined the Soviet workers state with its profoundly anti-Marxist dogma of "building socialism in one country." As the lowest stage of classless communist society, socialism must be based on material abundance, requiring proletarian revolutions internationally, including in the advanced industrialized countries. The Stalinists opposed the perspective of world proletarian revolution and instead pursued accommodation with imperialism. After decades of Stalinist betrayal and unremitting imperialist pressure, the Soviet Union fell to the forces of capitalist restoration in 1991-92—a historic defeat for the working class and the oppressed the world over.

In the aftermath, China became the imperialists' main target for capitalist counterrevolution. To destroy the workers state that arose out of the 1949 Chinese Revolution, the imperialists ratchet up military pressure against Beijing while pursuing a policy of internal economic and political subversion, including promoting counterrevolutionary forces such as the "Free Tibet" movement around the Dalai Lama.

Unlike the early Soviet state, the Chinese workers state was deformed from its inception under the rule of the nationalist Stalinist Communist Party bureaucracy. Today the fight to defend China and the other remaining deformed workers states—North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba—against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution is urgently posed. Our defense of China, as well as North Korea, includes supporting their development of nuclear weapons and delivery systems. Simultaneously, as Trotskyists we fight for proletarian political revolution to sweep away the Stalinist bureaucracies and place power in the hands of workers and peasants councils (soviets) committed to the fight for world proletarian revolution.

This is the framework in which we approach the question of environmental degradation and other social problems in China today. Many environmentalists join with the imperialists in pointing an accusing finger at China, which has overtaken the U.S. as the world's top emitter of greenhouse gases. To date, Beijing has rebuffed efforts by the imperialists to lock it into a timetable for cuts, in the process ridiculing the West for blaming China for increased emissions from the manufacture of goods financed by Western capital for export to the West.

Currently, 70 percent of China's energy comes from burning coal. This includes the widespread use of coal for household fuel in rural areas, not just in its power plants. China relies on coal because coal is what it has. This underlies why the U.S. imperialists are so insistent on limiting China's emissions (while exempt-

Getty

Reuters

Left: Plant producing wind turbines in Chinese province of Xinjiang, August 2010. Right: Dead fish at rural fish farm, December 2006, evidence of massive pollution of Chinese water sources.

ing their own from controls). Curtailing the production and use of coal would gravely undermine China's economy. At the same time, the massive appetite for coal has helped spur the proliferation of privately owned deathtrap mines, whose bosses pay off government inspectors to look the other way. This is a major reason for China's succession of deadly mining disasters.

Despite capitalist inroads resulting from "market reforms," China's core economy remains based on collectivized property, providing examples of what can be done when the guiding principle is not the generation of profit. While the capitalist world has been mired in recession, China has undergone enormous economic growth, largely on the strength of a massive stimulus program based on state-owned banks and industries (see "China: Labor Struggles in the 'Socialist Market Economy'," *WV* Nos. 964 and 965, 10 and 24 September).

In this same period, Beijing announced plans to drastically reduce the rate of growth of carbon-dioxide output by 2020. To that end, the central government plans to spend 5 trillion yuan ($738 billion) over the next decade to develop cleaner sources of energy, including wind and solar power, as well as electric and hybrid cars. China had already emerged as "the world's leading builder of more efficient, less polluting coal power plants, mastering the technology and driving down the cost" (*New York Times*, 11 May 2009). A few years ago, China completed the Qinghai-Tibet railway—the world's longest at such high elevations and the first railway to ever reach Tibet. A *Science* magazine (27 April 2007) article remarked that the project had the potential to be remembered as an "ecological miracle," noting among other things its network of tunnels to avoid disrupting the seasonal migration of animals, the detouring of tracks around wetlands and the insulation of tracks to avoid destabilizing permafrost.

Nevertheless, there are very real environmental problems in China. Large cities choke under toxic shrouds. Massive dumping of industrial waste renders one third of the country's rivers and huge parts of its lakes unfit for industrial or agricultural use, and several hundred million Chinese lack access to safe water. Although legislation to curb pollution is in place, corrupt and venal bureaucrats do not strictly enforce the laws. Along with struggles of peasants and workers against economic hardship, there have been numerous pollution-related protests, with some 50,000 in 2005 alone. In August 2009, hundreds of residents in northwestern Shaanxi province stormed a smelting plant blamed for sickening more than 600 children. This July, more than 1,000 people threw rocks at police and blocked roads in southern China to protest pollution from a plant owned by one of the country's largest private aluminum producers.

Despite its historic advances, China remains marked by its backward rural heritage. Under Stalinist rule, bureaucratic mismanagement of the collectivized economy combined with the effects of three decades of "market reforms" has led to growing inequalities and a myriad of unresolved social problems. A proletarian political revolution would create a regime of workers democracy based on workers and peasants councils (soviets), which would decide economic strategy and other key questions not through bureaucratic fiat but through open debate. The factories would be run not by appendages of a self-interested bureaucracy but by factory councils, with a role for trade unions free from bureaucratic control.

However, no amount of workers democracy can substitute for the advanced technology—and time—needed to overcome the urban-rural divide and other examples of China's lingering backwardness. Led by a Leninist-Trotskyist party, the Chinese workers state would be committed to the fight for proletarian revolution throughout Asia and especially in the advanced capitalist countries. A proletarian political revolution in China would have an enormous impact on workers' consciousness internationally, revitalizing class struggle and especially the understanding that its ultimate aim must he socialist revolution.

Giovanni Caselli

Depiction of Neolithic farming settlement about 6,000 years ago, based on excavations in present-day Wales.

For a Collectivized, Planned World Economy Under Workers Rule!

Against green ideologists who deify "unspoiled" nature, we recognize that since the earliest days our ancestors roamed the earth, they have left their imprint on the natural world, and it in turn has impacted the development of civilization. Over the years human intervention, from clearing large tracts of land for agriculture to operating smoke-belching factories and detonating A-bombs, has both accelerated natural processes and added extra complications. In "The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man," Engels catalogs several unintended consequences of attempts to manipulate nature by various peoples from different epochs and observes: "Thus at every step we are reminded that we by no means rule over nature like a conqueror over a foreign people, like someone standing outside of nature—but that we, with flesh, blood and brain, belong to nature, and exist in its midst, and that all our mastery of it consists in the fact that we have the advantage over all other creatures of being able to learn its laws and apply them correctly."

For there to be any chance of rationally expanding the forces of production and utilizing the planet's resources, including meeting the challenges of climate change, decaying modern capitalism must go. The conscious, large-scale planning required is entirely incompatible with the profit motive and competition, the anarchy of the market and crises of overproduction, the division of the world into nation-states and interimperialist rivalries. It will take a series of proletarian revolutions to establish an internationally planned, socialist economy, which will liberate the productive capacities of mankind and eliminate scarcity, the precondition for the disappearance of classes and the withering away of the state in a communist society.

Confronting the vast gulf separating the "First World" from the "Third World," an international federation of workers states would marshal world productive resources to immensely raise the standard of living of the impoverished masses in Africa, Asia and Latin America, who today, under imperialist subjugation, are deprived of such necessities as decent housing, quality health care and education and clean water. Rational urban planning, free extensive mass transportation and the reduction of waste would be possible. Considerable resources could be invested in developing low-emissions energy sources, and measures could also he taken to mitigate the impact of climate change by extending massive aid to its victims—from food, drinking water and medicine to resources to relocate entire cities and populations of low-lying islands.

No one can stop tsunamis from forming nor tectonic plates from shifting. Nor do Marxists claim that we can fix all of humanity's problems. As Marxist historian Isaac Deutscher noted in a 1966 speech titled "On Socialist Man," "We are struggling in the first instance with the predicaments that are of man's making and that man can resolve." He went on:

> "Trotsky, for instance, speaks of three basic tragedies—hunger, sex, and death—besetting man. Hunger is the enemy that Marxism and the modern labor movement have taken on.... But is it not true that hunger or, more broadly, social inequality and oppression, have hugely complicated and intensified for innumerable human beings the torments of sex and death as well?... Socialist man will still be pursued by sex and death; but we are convinced that he will be better equipped than we are to cope even with these."

When the proletariat seizes power and accomplishes its historic mission of universal emancipation, wrote Engels in *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* (1880):

> "The whole sphere of the conditions of life which environ man, and which have hitherto ruled man, now comes under the dominion and control of man, who for the first time becomes the real, conscious lord of nature, because he has now become master of his own social organization.... Only from that time will man himself, with full consciousness, make his own history—only from that time will the social causes set in movement by him have, in the main and in a constantly growing measure, the results intended by him."

It is the purpose of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) to forge the vanguard workers parties that are necessary to lead the proletariat, at the head of all the dispossessed and oppressed, in a victorious fight for a socialist future. ■

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Kashmir...

(continued from page 12)

Firdousi Farooq, whose son was also killed by a teargas shell fired by Indian police:

> "Why should I not protest? Why should I not pick up a stone? I am doing this in the honour of my martyred son. I am doing this for azadi (freedom) from subjugation and repression."

The latest round of killings is but the continuation of decades of repression of the Kashmiri people's struggle against national oppression. Since 1990, when around 100 unarmed demonstrators were shot dead by Indian troops on Gawakadal Bridge in the summer capital Srinagar, as many as 80,000 have been killed. The Indian military maintains an occupying force of nearly 700,000 troops and paramilitaries there, enforcing a brutal regime of curfews, arbitrary arrests, executions, rape and torture.

But the conflict in Kashmir has potentially catastrophic consequences beyond the sufferings of the Kashmiri people. The Himalayan territory is a major bone of contention between India and neighbouring Pakistan, nuclear-armed foes who have already fought three wars for control of Kashmir, in 1947-48, 1965 and

again in 1999. The 1947-48 war, fought while both armies were still under British generals, resulted in the partition of Kashmir. Hundreds of thousands of troops still face each other across the Line of Control, the de facto border dividing Kashmir. The on-off "peace talks" between the two countries were abruptly halted following the criminal 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai which killed 174 people and for which India blamed Pakistan.

In the event of war between these equally reactionary capitalist powers we call on the workers of India and Pakistan to turn the war into a struggle against their "own" capitalist rulers. We applied this revolutionary defeatist position towards India and Pakistan in 1971 when India seized upon the just struggle by East Pakistan (Bangladesh) for independence from West Pakistan as a pretext for war. When the nationalist Awami League handed military control of the Bengali independence struggle over to India, we said, "the just struggle of the Bengalis was entirely subordinated and integrated into the interests of the predator India at the expense of the predator Pakistan." We added that: "Under these conditions to call for support to the Bengali independence struggle is to play into the hands of [then Indian Prime Minister] Indira Gandhi and the Bengali national traitors. Revolutionary defeatism, the policy that calls upon both armies to turn their guns against their own rulers, is the only policy which can achieve the aspirations of the working masses" (*Workers Vanguard* No. 4, January 1972).

Today, insofar as the Kashmiri struggle is not decisively subordinated to a military conflict between the Pakistani ruling class and its Indian rival, Marxists uphold the right of self-determination for the people of Kashmir, which means the right to independence or—should they so choose—to merge with Pakistan (or India). Historically, despite the virulent Hindu chauvinism of New Delhi, union

WV Map (sources include *Economist*)

with Pakistan has found little support in Indian-controlled Kashmir, whose population, in addition to the four million Muslims in the valley of Kashmir, includes two million Hindus, concentrated in Jammu, as well as a smaller number of Sikhs and Buddhists. Pakistan is a stultifying Islamic theocracy which has long denied basic civil and political rights to its own people, much less to the Kashmiris in so-called Azad (Free) Kashmir on the Pakistani side of the Line of Control. Like India, Pakistan is a prison house for its national and religious minorities.

In supporting the right of self-determination for Kashmir we do not give an ounce of political support to any of the competing Kashmiri opposition forces—neither the "secular" separatist Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), nor the various Islamic-fundamentalist outfits like Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Taiba. All of these forces are hostile to the class struggle of the workers and peasants against capitalist oppression and exploitation whether in India, Pakistan or Kashmir. Especially since the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 and the subsequent counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, many of the imperialist-backed Islamic-fundamentalists who were fighting the Red Army in Afghanistan have shifted to Kashmir where they have largely supplanted the JKLF in the leadership of the anti-India struggle. Far from fighting for the national emancipation of the Kashmiri people, these reactionary forces engage in communalist terror against non-Muslim religious minorities in Kashmir and India, and pose a deadly threat to Kashmiri women in particular.

While power remains in the hands of the bloody capitalist rulers in Islamabad and New Delhi, backed by the imperialists, the prospects for Kashmiri national liberation are slim indeed. This is especially so given Kashmir's strategic location and historical role in relations between India and Pakistan. The cause of national justice for the Kashmiri people is inseparably tied up with the revolutionary struggle of the working masses of both countries against their capitalist oppressors. There can be no genuine expression of the right of Kashmiri self-determination without the withdrawal of both occupying armies. In opposition to the chauvinism of the rulers in New Delhi and Islamabad workers in both countries must demand: all Indian and Pakistani troops out now!

Divide and Rule

Both India and Pakistan are beholden to the imperialist powers, today chiefly the U.S. The antagonism between the two countries, as well as the attendant communal and ethnic divisions, are the legacy of a deliberate policy of divide-and-rule practised by the British imperialists as colonial overlords of the subcontinent. This policy was succinctly described by W.H. Fitchett, a pro-imperialist historian writing about Britain's suppression of the 1857 Indian uprising against British rule, who said:

> "What a demonstration the whole story is, of the Imperial genius of the British race! 'A nation,' to quote Hodson [a British military chief]—himself one of the most brilliant actors in the great drama—'which could conquer a country like the Punjaub, with a Hindoostanee army, then turn the energies of the conquered Sikhs to subdue the very army by which they were tamed; which could fight out a position like Peshawur for years, in the very teeth of the Afghan tribes; and then, when suddenly deprived of the regiments which effected this, could unhesitatingly employ those very tribes to disarm and quell those regiments when in mutiny—a nation which could do this, is destined indeed to rule the world!'"
>
> —*The Tale of the Great Mutiny* (1902)

The continued slaughter in Kashmir today is a legacy of the 1947 partition of India, carried out under [Prime Minister] Clement Attlee's Labour government. India was divided along religious-communal lines, creating the modern states of India and Pakistan. The partition led to the slaughter of up to a million people and massive population transfers. The princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, despite having a majority Muslim population, was ruled at the time by a Hindu maharaja (under the suzerainty of the British Crown) who, according to Indian sources, opted to accede to India. When Pathan tribesmen from Pakistan crossed the border in 1947 in an attempt to force the issue in favour of Pakistan, the popular Kashmiri leader Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, fearing the dominance of the Muslim Punjabi landlords, also opted for India, conditional upon an eventual plebiscite. However, the Indian bourgeoisie reneged on this promise; a vote has never been held, and while the Hindu-chauvinist Indian bourgeoisie today declares Kashmir to be an "integral part of India," there is overwhelming sentiment among the Muslims of the valley of Kashmir for an end to Indian occupation.

For a Socialist Federation of South Asia!

Kashmir is strategically placed on India's borders not only with Pakistan and Afghanistan, but also with China, which controls Aksai Chin, a territory that India claims as part of Kashmir. The Tawang district in Arunachal Pradesh is also disputed by India and China who fought a war in 1962. Today the rivalry between the two countries is acute. In any military conflict between capitalist India and the People's Republic of China, we Trotskyists stand for unconditional military defence of China, a deformed workers state. The 1949 Revolution, led by Mao's peasant-guerrilla army defeated the Guomindang nationalist regime of Chiang Kai-shek, shattered capitalist rule and liberated the country from subservience to Japanese and Western imperialism.

The Chinese Revolution resulted in enormous social gains for workers, peasants and women. But the workers state that issued out of it was ***bureaucratically deformed***, ruled by a privileged caste headed by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). We fight for proletarian political revolution to oust the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy in Beijing and to establish a regime of workers democracy. Stalinism—of which Maoism is a variant—arose as an ideology in the Soviet workers state following the defeat of the revolutionary wave in Europe that followed the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. Beginning in 1923-24, a conservative bureaucratic caste which Stalin came to lead usurped ***political*** power from the proletariat, while resting on the social and economic gains of the revolution. The Soviet Union thus became a degenerated workers state.

In the treacherous tradition of Stalin and the bureaucratic caste which ruled in the former Soviet Union, Mao and his heirs in the CCP leadership aligned themselves with U.S. imperialism, and with Pakistan, betraying the interests of the oppressed masses. During the 1980s, the Chinese Stalinists supported the imperialist-backed Islamic *mujahedin* in Afghanistan—ultra-reactionary forces who were waging *jihad* (holy war) against the Soviet Union.

The Red Army posed the possibility of a social transformation that would have lifted Afghanistan from the feudal social conditions that prevail, especially for women. Instead, Mikhail Gorbachev's withdrawal of the Soviet troops was a precursor to counterrevolution in the USSR itself in 1991-92. This catastrophe for the working masses of the world had a direct impact in Kashmir, where the *mujahedin* turned their attention, strengthening the hold of the most reactionary forces within the national liberation struggle. Kashmir epitomises the seething complex of national and communal conflicts that extend from Afghanistan to Pakistan and India. The brutal repression in Kashmir, the only majority Muslim state in India, gives the lie to New Delhi's claims that it is a "secular" democracy. The Indian state was founded on naked Hindu chauvinism and brutal oppression of minorities has been the rule under the "secular" Congress party, as well as the avowedly chauvinist BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]. Today India's much vaunted economic progress has brought fabulous wealth to a tiny elite while the vast majority of workers and peasants are mired in abject poverty. Age-old caste oppression remains pervasive while women are the slaves of slaves throughout the subcontinent.

For Pakistan, Kashmir represents its pretence to stand for "one nation" of all Muslims. Pakistan's rulers can ill afford to support independence for Kashmir, which would pose the same question for the minorities within its own borders, including Baluchis, Pathans and Sindhis, who chafe under Punjabi domination. But Pakistan itself is an artificial state—Pathans are divided between Pakistan and Afghanistan; Baluchis between Iran and Pakistan and today such ethnic divisions are once again being exacerbated by the U.S. and British imperialist occupation of Afghanistan.

The key to ending the national oppression of the Kashmiri people, as well as the myriad sufferings wrought by capitalism, is the fight for socialist revolution throughout the subcontinent and the establishment of a socialist federation of South Asia. For that it is necessary to forge Leninist-Trotskyist parties which would seek to mobilise the powerful proletariat of India and Pakistan at the head of all the oppressed to sweep away the capitalist system. Indian and Pakistani workers in the diaspora in Britain, the U.S., Canada and elsewhere form a human bridge to the working class in the imperialist centres where socialist revolution can lay the basis for a socialist future for mankind. ■

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Niqab Ban...

(continued from page 3)

the advanced capitalist countries where women have achieved a measure of formal equality, women's oppression cannot be legislated out of existence. This oppression originates in class society itself and can only be rooted out through the destruction of private property in the means of production. The family unit cannot simply be abolished; its functions must be *replaced* with socialized childcare and housework in an egalitarian socialist society.

Just as Harper embraces the ban on *niqab*-wearing women, he and his federal Tory government are ratcheting up the war on abortion rights. Like true Colonel Blimp colonialists, they have announced a "foreign aid" plan ostensibly designed to improve maternal health in the Third World that denies any funding for abortion. Millions of women around the world suffer unwanted pregnancies and die in childbirth, and a major cause of female mortality is botched "back-alley" abortions. But this is of no concern to Harper and the anti-abortion fanatics, who have been emboldened by his stance. Harassment of women outside abortion clinics has increased, and on May 13 some 15,000 people rallied on Parliament Hill calling for the banning of abortion. Heavily mobilized by the Catholic church, the rally included a raft of MPs from the Tory and Liberal caucuses. Down with anti-abortion reaction! For free abortion on demand!

Imperialist Barbarism and Islamic Fundamentalism

The increased prevalence of the Muslim veil today is in part due to the rise of political Islam internationally. It is also a result of the relentless racism, poverty and hardship suffered by Muslim immigrants and their descendants in Canada and other imperialist countries. In the segregated immigrant communities, all the reactionary "traditions" are preserved through ties to the homeland. Young immigrant and minority women are trapped between the racism of these societies and oppressive, rigid family strictures. Unable to find jobs that provide financial independence, life for them is an endless saga of miseries.

We Marxists fight for the *voluntary integration of all minorities based on full equality*. The eradication of racism, women's oppression and all forms of discrimination requires a revolutionary struggle, mobilizing the power of the multiracial working class to uproot capitalism and liberate humanity from poverty and want. This perspective is sharply counterposed to the "multiculturalism" propounded by the Canadian rulers and the reformist left, which promotes illusions that the capitalist state can be used as an instrument to fight racist oppression. This state exists to defend class rule based on private property; it is used by the capitalists for the suppression and exploitation of the working class. The supposedly liberal program of multiculturalism strengthens the hold of "community leaders," with their ties to mosque, church or temple, and it denies that minority communities, like the rest of society, are class-divided. The struggles of immigrant and other minority workers for jobs, unions and equal status require breaking the grip of religious and other conservative community leaders.

To justify the persecution of Naema Ahmed, Quebec's minister responsible for the status of women, Christine St-Pierre, invoked the bloody imperialist occupation of Afghanistan: "There are people in Quebec, in Canada, and other countries around the world, who have gone to Afghanistan and spilled their blood so that these things won't be tolerated" (*Globe and Mail*, 10 March). The ban on the *niqab* has as much to do with women's liberation as the NATO occupation of Afghanistan does, i.e., nothing.

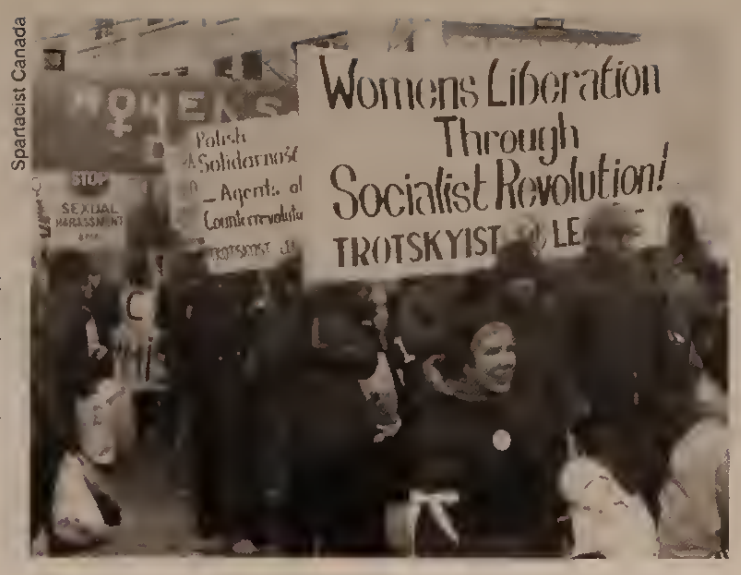
The U.S. and Canadian imperialists and their apologists have used the brutal oppression of Afghan women under the former Taliban regime as a justification for the neocolonial occupation of that country. But the anti-woman Islamic cutthroats came to power there in the early 1990s with the ***support*** of U.S. and Canadian imperialism, as well as that of the NDP social democrats. And today's U.S. puppet regime in Kabul continues and upholds the same hideous oppression of women. U.S., Canada, NATO: Get out of Afghanistan now!

When there was a real possibility of liberating Afghan women, the U.S. and Canadian imperialists were on the other side. In the late 1970s, when a modernizing Afghan government moved to implement modest reforms for women such as lowering the bride price and instituting education, the tribal *mujahedin* (holy warriors) erupted in violence and terror. To protect its borders from the fundamentalist threat, which was already backed by the CIA, in late 1979 the Soviet Union sent its Red Army into Afghanistan at the invitation of the left-nationalist government in Kabul. The U.S. government spent billions to fund the *mujahedin*'s holy war against the Soviet Union in what was the biggest CIA operation in history.

We declared "Hail Red Army!" and called to extend the social gains of the October 1917 Russian Revolution to the Afghan peoples, especially the terribly oppressed women. Sending the army to clean out the reactionary insurgency opened a road to liberation for the Afghan peoples. It underlined our Trotskyist understanding that the Soviet Union was a workers state, product of the October Revolution, despite its later degeneration under a nationalist, Stalinist bureaucracy.

The liberating effects of the Soviet intervention were measured in hard statistics. In 1988, women made up 40 percent of the doctors and 60 percent of the teachers at the University of Kabul; 440,000 female students were enrolled in educational institutions and 80,000 more in literacy programs. Western dress was common in the cities, and women enjoyed a real measure of freedom from the veil and subjugation for the first time in Afghan history. But rather than fighting to defeat the CIA-backed fundamentalist forces, the Kremlin Stalinists under Mikhail Gorbachev criminally withdrew the Soviet troops in 1989. This was a huge betrayal of Afghan women, workers and leftists. It paved the way for the triumph of Washington's woman-hating cutthroats, and for handing the Soviet Union itself over to counterrevolution two years later—a colossal defeat for the workers of the world.

Reactionary ideas take hold and grow in reactionary periods. Especially since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, there has been a rise of fundamentalism of every kind: Protestant fundamentalism in North America; Orthodox Jewish fundamentalism in Israel; an ever greater reach by the Catholic church into social life in Europe; Islamic fundamentalism in the Muslim countries and in imperialist centres with large Muslim populations. All the variants of the "opium of the people," as Marx called religion, are freely disseminated. The growth of this false consciousness is rooted in despair and the lie that class struggle and authentic communism are no longer possible.



Trotskyist League marches in Toronto on International Women's Day, 1982.

Robert/Sygma

Kabul, 1988. Intervention of Soviet Army in 1979 opened road to liberation of women in Afghanistan. Kremlin's 1989 withdrawal of troops betrayed Afghan women and leftists and paved way for counterrevolution in USSR.

Only Socialist Revolution Can Liberate the Oppressed!

The "war on terror" pursued by the imperialist rulers is a classic "divide and rule" ploy, stigmatizing Muslims as an excuse for a sweeping reduction in the legal rights of the entire population. It is also aimed at the working class, intended to stifle class struggle by insisting on "national unity" against a supposed common enemy. The "war on terror" must be fought by mobilizations of the multiethnic working class.

Workers across the country are paying for the capitalist economic crisis with their jobs, livelihoods, pensions and health care. In Quebec, Charest has launched a large-scale assault on public-sector workers and social services, provoking large labour protests. In contrast, protests against Bill 94 have been tiny. Far from opposing the ban on public services for women wearing the *niqab*, the leadership of Quebec's largest union federation, the FTQ, publicly supports it, stating in a brief to a government committee: "The FTQ entirely endorses this policy, which seeks to ensure normality in communications between individuals, security and identification during the provision of public services" (ftq.qc.ca, 20 May).

The persecution of Muslim women—who are among the most oppressed in society—is poison to labour's battles. Struggling for class unity, workers must oppose Bill 94 as well as all the racist anti-immigration laws and fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. Muslims and other minorities make up a growing part of the working class in Montreal, as well as Toronto and some other cities. To win against the bosses requires defending the unity of the working class against racist demagogy.

The liberation of women starts with the class struggle. When the working class takes power, this alone will lay the basis to free women from age-old family servitude and reorganize society in the interest of all the oppressed. As we wrote in our article "The 'Honour' Killing of Aqsa Parvez" (*SC* No. 156, Spring 2008 [reprinted in *WV* No. 917, 4 July 2008]):

> "This perspective requires a tremendous leap in social development, which can only be achieved through sweeping away capitalist rule on a global basis and replacing it with a rational, democratically planned economy.
>
> "We Trotskyists fight to build a multiethnic vanguard party of the type built by the Bolshevik leaders Lenin and Trotsky to lead the world's first socialist revolution in October 1917. Such a party will be forged through hard political struggle against the pro-capitalist NDP and labour bureaucracy, who work to tie the workers to their 'own' national capitalists. Through its daily struggles against racism and women's oppression, a revolutionary party will build the authority among the working class to mobilize it against all manner of social backwardness, including the vicious abuse of women. In a communist future, women will be fully and equally integrated into society, and anti-woman violence and bigotry, the reactionary constraints of family and religion and the repressive role of the capitalist state will be but barbaric memories of the past."■

Spartacus Youth Club Events

CHICAGO

Wednesday, Oct. 13, 6:30 p.m.

For Permanent Revolution! Break with Bourgeois Populism!

University of Illinois
at Chicago
African American Cultural Center
Gallery Room 207
Addams Hall
830 S. Halsted Street
(take Blue Line—UIC Halsted stop)
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
chicagosyc@sbcglobal.net

NEW YORK CITY

Wednesday, Oct. 13, 7 p.m.

The Capitalist State in Racist America

No Vote to the Democrats, Republicans or Greens!

City College of New York
Room NAC 1/211 A
138th St. and Convent Ave.
(A train to 145th, 1 train to 138th)
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
nysl@tiac.net

TORONTO

Wednesday, Oct. 13, 6 p.m.

Capitalist Anarchy and the Immiseration of the Working Class

University of Toronto
OISE (Ontario Institute
for Studies in Education)
252 Bloor St. West
Room 2289
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
spartcan@on.aibn.com

VANCOUVER

Thursday, Oct. 14, 6:30 p.m.

Marxism vs. Anarchism on the State and Revolution

University of British Columbia
Student Union Building
Room 212
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
trotskyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

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WORKERS VANGUARD

All Indian and Pakistani Troops Out Now!

Down With India's Bloody Repression in Kashmir!

EPA

AFP

Srinagar: Indian paramilitaries attack Kashmiri protesters, August 13 (left); rally against Indian occupation, September 11 (right).

We print below an article published by our comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain in their newspaper, *Workers Hammer* (No. 212, Autumn 2010). After its publication, separatist protests continued in Kashmir. In response, India's repression has worsened and its human toll has increased. Over 100 have been killed since June. As reported by the London *Guardian* (26 September): "In addition to the dead, many thousands have been seriously injured or beaten" and hundreds have been detained. New Delhi has deployed hundreds of additional troops, and curfews remain in effect.

In late September, the Indian government offered a cynical "peace" package that included cosmetic moves to "ease" the security strictures in major cities and blood money to families of those killed by Indian troops. Not surprisingly, India's proposal has been rejected by the Kashmiri separatists.

* * *

In recent months the Indian state has stepped up its murderous repression of the majority Muslim population in the Kashmir Valley. On 11 June, 17-year-old student Tufail Ahmad Matoo was killed by police who fired a teargas canister at his head, sparking angry protests. Youths armed only with stones have fought daily battles with Indian police and soldiers, while hundreds of thousands have taken to the streets demanding "Go India! Go back!" and "We want freedom."

More than 60 people have been killed in the latest shootings and hundreds injured, many of them teenagers. An article titled "The Angry Housewives Setting Kashmir Ablaze" on the *BBC News* website (16 August) quotes a woman protester,

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Mumia Is Innocent! Free Him Now!

Appeals Court Hearing on Death Sentence for Mumia Abu-Jamal

The forces of racist capitalist "law and order" are moving one step closer to executing Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was convicted on false charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner and sentenced to death in 1982 on the basis of his political views. On November 9, the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia will hold a hearing to determine whether to uphold Mumia's death sentence, which was overturned in a 2001 decision by federal district judge William Yohn that simultaneously reaffirmed Mumia's frame-up conviction. The new hearing is a result of a January U.S. Supreme Court ruling that vacated Yohn's decision, which had been previously upheld by the Third Circuit. In April 2009, the Court summarily turned down Mumia's petition to overturn his conviction. The aim of these rulings is unmistakable: to push forward Mumia's execution.

Mumia is an innocent man. His conviction was based on lying testimony extorted by the cops, a "confession" manufactured by the police and prosecutors and phony ballistics "evidence." His death sentence was secured after prosecutors cited political statements Mumia made when he was a teenage leader of the Philadelphia Black Panthers. The cops, courts and prosecutors have since continued their vendetta against Mumia, a supporter of the Philadelphia MOVE group and an award-winning journalist renowned for his searing exposés of cop brutality and racist oppression. Through appeal after appeal, the courts have refused to hear the overwhelming evidence of Mumia's innocence, including Arnold Beverly's confession that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Faulkner.

Mumia continues to speak out for the poor and oppressed through his writings from death row. In seeking to execute this innocent man, the capitalist rulers are sending a message to the working class and all who would fight against exploitation, oppression and imperialist war that they, too, are in the state's gun sights.

It is unlikely that the Third Circuit will defy the Supreme Court. If the death sentence is upheld, the case will go back to Judge Yohn to consider still-pending claims by Mumia. While supporting the use of every legal means available to Mumia, the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee have always warned

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COC Productions

WORKERS VANGUARD 50¢

No. 967 22 October 2010

Electoral Circuses, No Bread

For a Class-Struggle Workers Party!

Democrats, Republicans: Partner Parties of War and Racism

While workers suffer the impact of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, with unemployment and foreclosures threatening the livelihoods and lives of millions, including those with no "safety net" whatsoever, the 2010 midterm elections are a circus, and a sick one at that. The capitalists' ideologues and editorialists tell you to take your pick: the Wall Street Democrats or the billionaires' club of the Republicans, with their racist and socially retrograde Tea Party wing. Parading as rebels against "big government," the Tea Party movement, composed mainly of enraged elements of the petty bourgeoisie, is funded by big bourgeois interests for electoral purposes. It's the usual shell game, the bosses' con, with the labor misleaders and black bourgeois politicians mobilizing working people and minorities to "fight the right"—i.e., vote Democrat.

In this game, the racist capitalist rulers always win, as the working people once again are lined up, *against* their own class interests, behind the supposedly more benign face of this system of exploitation, oppression and war. A recent memo from AFL-CIO political director Karen Ackerman obtained by the *New York Times* documents a massive campaign to get out the union vote. The memo complains that corporations and right-wing groups "are spending record amounts of undisclosed money to lie to voters about which candidates will fight for the middle class" and raises a call to fight for "economic patriots who will stand with working people." Here in capsule form is the class collaborationism that defines the outlook of the labor misleaders. For them, wage workers are a part of a great "middle class" of Americans who share common national interests with the capitalist exploiters.

This myth is ingrained in the dominant bourgeois ideology, which obscures the *class line* dividing the tiny class of capitalists—the owners of industry and the banks, whose driving interest is profit—from the working class—i.e., those who sell their labor power to the capitalists. As the bosses' labor lieutenants, the union bureaucracy has increasingly sacrificed the class-struggle weapons that built the unions in the first place—strikes, plant occupations, mass labor protest. As a result, the union movement is at a historic low point, at a time when the capitalists are trying to make the working people pay for the economic crisis.

All over the capitalist world, the working class is facing austerity measures and union-busting. In response, Europe has seen an outbreak of defensive labor

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Washington Escalates Attacks in Pakistan

Bloody U.S. Imperialism Out of Afghanistan Now!

Barack Obama came to office pledging to step up the murderous U.S./NATO war in Afghanistan, including by intervening militarily in Pakistan to chase down Taliban leaders. As president, he has fulfilled that campaign promise and then some. While almost tripling the number of troops in Afghanistan to nearly 100,000, Obama has sharply stepped up attacks by pilotless drone aircraft in neighboring Pakistan, killing villagers by the score. The CIA carried out a record 26 such sorties last month. In a further escalation, U.S./NATO helicopters operating out of Afghanistan recently carried out several cross-border raids into Pakistan, including a September 30 attack in which they shot up a couple of border posts, killing three Pakistani soldiers.

As is inevitable in all imperialist occupations, the war in Afghanistan has entailed an endless series of atrocities directed against civilians, who have perished by the thousands. In the latest of the seemingly endless litany of sadistic outrages perpetrated by imperialist forces, a dozen U.S. Army soldiers stationed in Kandahar province have been charged in

AP

Afghan villagers mourn victims of U.S./NATO attack in Nangarhar Province, September 19.

the random murder of Afghan civilians for sport. The soldiers cut up the bodies of their victims in order to save fingers and skulls as trophies of war.

The invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 under George W. Bush was initially embraced by bourgeois liberals as a "just" response to the September 11 terror attacks. The occupations of Afghanistan and, later, Iraq were largely intended by the U.S. imperialists as an assertion of Washington's willingness and ability to project military power and ride roughshod over anyone the imperialists perceive as standing in their way.

Today, with no end in sight to the Afghan quagmire and with their economies reeling from the world capitalist crisis, Washington's NATO allies who have nearly 50,000 troops in Afghanistan, are increasingly withdrawing their contingents or preparing to do so: the Netherlands pulled out this summer, Canada is scheduled to do so next year and Poland's newly elected president promised to follow suit by 2012. While maintaining some 50,000 troops in Iraq, Obama seeks to define an "exit strategy" from Afghanistan that can be implemented before the 2012 elections and will not be perceived as a humiliating debacle.

That strategy includes a massive expansion of secret CIA operations. Journalist Bob Woodward reports in his new book *Obama's Wars* that the CIA created and controls a 3,000-man paramilitary army of Afghans known as Counterterrorism Pursuit Teams, which carry out covert operations in Pakistan against suspected Al Qaeda and Taliban militants. As Woodward explains, Obama has kept in place or expanded 14 intelligence orders, known as findings, issued under Bush to provide a legal basis for the CIA's worldwide covert operations. Obama has enormously expanded the global deployment of special operations forces, which now operate in 75 countries, including Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia.

The importance the administration places on these operations helps explain its uproar over the leaking of 76,000 classified U.S. military field reports posted in August on the Web site WikiLeaks. The logs show that CIA-led forces

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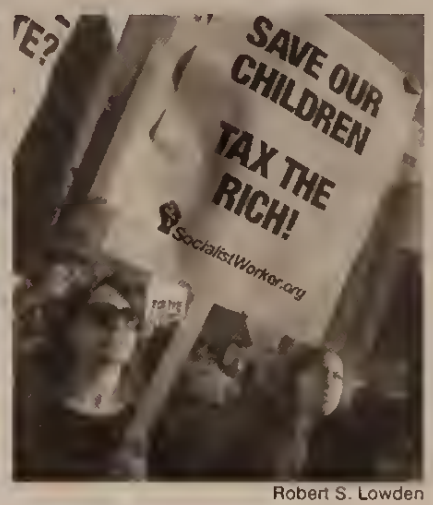
ISO's Quandary:

On One Knee or Two Before Obama?

Two years ago, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) celebrated the election of Barack Obama as the new Commander-in-Chief of U.S. imperialism as a "transformative" event in American politics. Pondering "how Obama and the Democrats will use their power," an editorial in *Socialist Worker* (7 November 2008) breathlessly asked if Obama would "fashion an economic program that puts the interests of working people at its center," "use government ownership of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac and shares in big banks in order to halt mortgage foreclosures," and institute "an economic stimulus program that creates secure, long-term jobs." While cautioning that Obama's "powerful message of hope" had not been "matched by a commitment to radical policies," the ISO nonetheless promised that with sufficient pressure "we can make the Obama years an era of struggle and political progress" (*Socialist Worker*, 19 November 2008).

Amid the carnage of mass joblessness, poverty and destitution, rising racist reaction and a full-bore assault on public sector unions, the escalation of the murderous occupation of Afghanistan—all hallmarks of the "Obama years" so far—it is hard to sell such political snake oil today. But ISO leader Lee Sustar was undeterred. In the face of a nationwide union-busting offensive against teachers unions by the Obama administration, Sustar opened an article in the 19 August *Socialist Worker* with the incredible statement: "Your president wants you to save teachers' jobs"!! As evidence of the Democratic Party president's "unequivocal" defense of teachers' jobs, Sustar pointed to Obama's cynical, get-out-the-vote promotion of a $10 billion education jobs bill passed in August.

Chicagoist



Robert S. Lowden

Reformists' hopes spring eternal: ISO-led protesters unfurl banner at Obama campaign rally in 2007 at University of Illinois at Chicago (left); sign at Los Angeles demonstration this March (right).

This drew a mild, if remarkably public, rebuke from Sustar's fellow ISO leader, Paul D'Amato (author of *Socialist Worker* columns that occasionally endeavor to provide some Marxist veneer to the ISO's abject reformism). In a 25 August letter to *Socialist Worker* titled "Don't Let Obama Off the Hook," D'Amato chastises Sustar for shining "a too-positive light on the Obama administration." A letter in the same issue from one Andy Libson was rather more harsh in taking Sustar to task, while professing his understanding that "Sustar and *Socialist Worker* are trying to use the words and deeds of our president to spur a quiescent working class into action."

Libson's telltale reference to Obama as "our president" gives the measure of the ISO's rare public "debate." At issue is not the fundamental Marxist principle of *warking-class independence* from all the parties and agencies of the capitalist class enemy. Rather, it is simply a question of how far to go in selling out to parties of the bourgeoisie.

In any case, Sustar, having been slapped on the wrist, has obviously been rehabilitated and is once again plying his pen for the cause of making the Democrats "fight." In a 4 October *Socialist Worker* article titled "The Change We Didn't Get," Sustar contrasts Obama's record with that of liberal icon Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who "managed to turn a far worse economic crisis into a political opportunity, locking in Democratic dominance of Congress for most of the next six decades."

And what a six decades it was. To take just the first two, under the rule of FDR and the subsequent Democratic Party regime we had: World War II, from which the U.S. emerged as the world's predominant imperialist power; the internment of Japanese Americans; the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; the launch of anti-Soviet Cold War I and the domestic anti-Communist witchhunt, which purged the unions of Communist Party (CP) and other militants who led the class battles of the 1930s; the slave-labor Taft-Hartley Act. These are but a few examples of the assaults on the working class and oppressed under "Democratic dominance of Congress."

But for Sustar, the nub of the problem is that "Roosevelt faced something Obama didn't: an insurgent working class." The 1930s was a period of tumultuous class struggle—from pitched battles with scabs and cops to sit-down strikes—when many militants were open to the need for a workers party. But in the ISO's eyes, the purpose of insurgent working-class struggle is not the eradication of capitalist exploitation and oppression but the consolidation of the rule of the class enemy in its Democratic Party face.

Nothing new here, and hardly just the view of Sustar—this was the line of the Stalinist CP as well as the social democrats of that day. For its part, the ISO was born locked in an anti-Communist embrace of imperialist "democracy" against Stalinist "totalitarianism," promoting the cause of any and every imperialist-inspired counterrevolutionary force whose aim was the destruction of the Soviet Union—a program the ISO continues to champion against the remaining states where capitalism has been overthrown, such as China.

The only reason Sustar got in some temporary trouble is that his declaration that Obama was defending teachers' jobs couldn't have been sold to extraterrestrials. It had to be cleaned up for the ISO to soldier on in trying to convince young radicals, workers and others not to give up on the idea that under sufficient pressure "from below" the Democrats can be made to serve the interests of the working class and oppressed. Exposing the reformist opponents of proletarian socialist revolution is part of the struggle to break the chains that have shackled the working class and oppressed to the Democratic Party and to forge a multiracial revolutionary working-class party.■

TROTSKY

LENIN

The Fraud of Bourgeois Democracy

Writing at the close of World War I, Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin exposed bourgeois democracy as a cover for brutal exploitation and oppression, a facade to conceal the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Lenin's 1918 work—a continuation of his 1917 classic The State and Revolution*—polemicized against apologists for "democratic" bourgeois rule, centrally Karl Kautsky, a leading German Social Democrat who bitterly opposed the 1917 October Revolution and soviet rule (i.e., workers democracy).*

If we are not to mock at common sense and history, it is obvious that we cannot speak of "pure democracy" as long as different ***classes*** exist; we can only speak of ***class*** democracy. (Let us say in parenthesis that "pure democracy" is not only an ***ignarant*** phrase, revealing a lack of understanding both of the class struggle and of the nature of the state, but also a thrice-empty phrase, since in communist society democracy will ***wither away*** in the process of changing and becoming a habit, but will never be "pure" democracy.)

"Pure democracy" is the mendacious phrase of a liberal who wants to fool the workers. History knows of bourgeois democracy which takes the place of feudalism, and of proletarian democracy which takes the place of bourgeois democracy....

Take the bourgeois parliament. Can it be that the learned Kautsky has never heard that the ***more highly*** democracy is developed, the ***more*** the bourgeois parliaments are subjected by the stock exchange and the bankers? This does not mean that we must not make use of bourgeois parliament.... But it does mean that only a liberal can forget the ***histarical limitations and conventional nature*** of the bourgeois parliamentary system as Kautsky does. Even in the most democratic bourgeois state the oppressed people at every step encounter the crying contradiction between the ***formal*** equality proclaimed by the "democracy" of the capitalists and the thousands of ***real*** limitations and subterfuges which turn the proletarians into ***wage-slaves***. It is precisely this contradiction that is opening the eyes of the people to the rottenness, mendacity and hypocrisy of capitalism. It is this contradiction that the agitators and propagandists of socialism are constantly exposing to the people, ***in arder ta prepare*** them for revolution!

—V.I. Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (1918)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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Asylum Now for All Refugees!

Stop Persecution of Tamils!

The following article is reprinted from Workers Hammer *No. 212 (Autumn 2010), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League.*

WORKERS HAMMER

Despite an attempted cover-up by the brutal Sri Lanka regime, evidence is emerging about the mass slaughter that was inflicted on the Tamil people in the North East of the island last year. During the final stages of the Sri Lankan army's military offensive, it is estimated that tens of thousands of Tamil civilians were slaughtered. At the end of the bloody 26-year war by the Sri Lankan armed forces against the Tamil people, the remnants of the Tamil mini-state were destroyed, the nationalist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which has been fighting for an independent Tamil state for the last three decades, suffered a military defeat and its leader, Vellupilai Prabhakaran, was executed. Some 300,000 Tamils who were trapped in a small area of the North East were interned in horrific prison camps and interrogation centres.

The Sinhala-chauvinist regime of Mahinda Rajapaksa, who was re-elected president in January in a grotesque display of anti-Tamil triumphalism, has continually sought to extract vengeance on the beleaguered survivors of this blood-bath. Over the past year many desperate refugees have lost their lives on the high seas as they attempt to flee to safety abroad. When nearly 500 Tamil refugees managed to make it to Canada, the Sri Lanka regime obscenely tried to vilify them as "terrorists."

The Canadian government whipped up a racist furore, sending a naval warship on August 12 armed with guided missiles to intercept the barely seaworthy cargo ship carrying the refugees, which had left Thailand in May and had already been turned away from Australia. Canadian police as well as the military boarded the vessel and took the migrants into custody; the majority of the refugees languish in jail while the state demonises them as potential "terrorists." The Canadian government also vowed to work with Australia and other countries to stop the Tamils from even setting sail. Australia already sends its navy to intercept refugees on the high seas, turning them back or redirecting them to Indonesia, which incarcerates them in Australian-funded detention centres. Those captured in "Australian waters" are imprisoned behind razor wire on remote Christmas Island. Five refugees died and scores were injured last year when their boat exploded after it was seized by the Australian navy. More recently, the Labor Party government there suspended the processing of all new asylum claims by Tamil as well as Afghan refugees and signalled its intent to ramp up deportations.

The plight of the refugees was captured in a 16 August letter issued by the Canadian Tamil Congress which stated:

> "We have undergone severe hardships with very little or no access to basic necessities such as food, water, sleeping space, medicine and sanitary facilities. We have traveled for almost four months with much suffering and pain. We have come here, to this wonderful country Canada, to protect ourselves and our family members from the murders, disappearances and violence that still exist in our native country."

Protesting the government's racist treatment and detention of the Tamils in British Columbia, our Canadian comrades wrote: "We demand that all those now detained in B.C. be released immediately and that all Tamil refugees be given full asylum! The fight to end the racist deportations and for full citizenship rights for everyone who has made it here is part of the struggle to sweep away the brutal rule of capitalism through socialist revolution" (*Spartacist Canada* No. 166, Fall 2010). The working class internationally must defend the Tamil people! *From Britain to Canada to Australia we demand: Asylum for Tamil refugees, fleeing the murderous onslaught by the Sri Lankan government and army!*

AFP

Some 300,000 Tamils were interned at Menik Farm (above) and other detention centers during and after Sri Lankan army offensive against Tamil separatists last year. Below: This August, Canadian police and military boarded ship carrying nearly 500 Tamil refugees, taking them into custody as potential "terrorists."

Department of National Defence

U.S. imperialism gave clear backing to the Rajapaksa government's offensive against the Tamils. On 6 January 2009 the American ambassador in Colombo issued a statement welcoming the fall of the Tigers' administrative capital, Kilinochchi, to the Lankan army and affirming that the U.S. "does not advocate that the Government of Sri Lanka negotiate with the LTTE" (*Asian Tribune*, 9 January 2009). Soon after, a high-level delegation from the U.S. Pacific Fleet Command arrived for "discussions" with the heads of the Lankan security forces (Indo-Asian News Service, 21 January 2009). Only ***after*** the army drove the LTTE from its final urban bases in early February did the U.S. and Britain call for a "temporary no-fire" agreement (*International Herald Tribune*, 4 February 2009).

Over the past year tens of thousands of Tamils in London, Toronto and other cities around the world have taken to the streets in protest at the desperate plight of the Tamil people on the island. The Spartacist League/Britain and other sections of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) have joined protests against the massacre, distributing literature in solidarity with the besieged Tamils and putting forward our proletarian-revolutionary perspective for national and social liberation. We have long upheld the right of self-determination for the Tamil people—i.e., their right to form an independent state in the largely Tamil North and East. We stand for the military defence of the LTTE against the army assault and demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Lankan army from the area.

At the same time, we give no political support to the LTTE—bourgeois nationalists who, following the logic of nationalism, have staged their own inter-ethnic attacks on Sinhalese villagers and expelled Muslims from the historic Tamil city of Jaffna, the capital of the northern region, while employing murderous violence against other Tamil nationalist groups. Our perspective is the fight for Marxist workers parties throughout the region that can unite the working people and oppressed in the struggle for workers revolutions in Lanka and throughout South Asia. That is the only road to liberation from the poverty, oppression and national chauvinism that are endemic to capitalist rule and have been visited with particular brutality on the masses of imperialism's neocolonies in Sri Lanka and the Indian subcontinent.

No Illusions in UN "Human Rights" Hypocrisy

Leaflets for Tamil protests in Britain have appealed to Western imperialist governments and the United Nations to come to the aid of the Tamils. A press statement issued following a July London rally by the British Tamils Forum reports that thousands gathered carrying placards and hoisting flags "appealing to the UK establishment and the UN to investigate war crimes and crimes against humanity in Sri Lanka." There should be absolutely no illusions that the UN, or the governments in Ottawa, London, Washington or other imperialist centres will defend the interests of the Tamil people. The often heated diplomatic rifts between the Colombo government on the one hand and the UN or the British government merely reflect tactical differences. The imperialist powers, including the UN, would prefer the blood-soaked Sri Lanka regime to adopt a hypocritical concern about "human rights" now that the war has ended. But the vindictive Rajapaksa regime is not about to pay lip service to "human rights" for Tamils. Indeed other repressive regimes such as in Israel, Myanmar and Thailand are beating a path to Colombo to learn how to apply the "Sri Lanka option"—i.e., mass slaughter—against the oppressed peoples on their own terrain.

When in February 2009 David Miliband, as foreign secretary under the then Labour government, addressed a meeting of the Global Tamil Forum in London (alongside the present Tory foreign secretary, William Hague) furious Sinhala-chauvinist protests in Colombo attacked the British High Commission and burned an effigy of Miliband. Needless to say Miliband used his speech to the Global Tamil Forum to denounce the LTTE, describing it as "a terrorist organisation which committed countless atrocities." This is rich, coming from a spokesman for a government that has responsibility for the brutal occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq that have led to countless thousands of deaths.

The Colombo government also went foam-flecked in June when UN secretary general Ban Ki Moon appointed a three-member advisory panel, which was intended to deflect external pressure from human rights groups and figures in the U.S. Congress. But this toothless UN body drew mobs of government-backed protesters onto the streets of Colombo, where the UN office was besieged and a cabinet minister, Wimal Weerawansa, went on a hunger strike. In response, the UN made it abundantly clear that the panel's aims are to award the Sri Lanka regime a "human rights" stamp of approval. A UN statement of 9 July said the panel's objectives include the "fostering of reconciliation" as well as "reflecting the commitment by Sri Lanka to the promotion and protection of human rights." The UN panel will also assist the "Lessons learnt and reconciliation commission" set up by the Rajapaksa regime to investigate why the 2002 ceasefire ended—i.e., to take the heat off the army and put the LTTE into the frame.

The UN is preparing a whitewash of the Sri Lankan military's heinous crimes and of the "democratic" imperialist powers who backed the Sri Lankan state in carrying out its brutal war against the Tamil people. The UN panel was set up over a year ***after*** the war had ended and amid widespread anger when information about Sri Lankan atrocities against the Tamils began to leak out into the public domain. Moreover, the UN itself was under criticism. A report in the (London) *Times* said that Ban Ki Moon's chief of staff, Vijar Namhiar, was told in late May 2009 that "at least 20,000 Tamil civilians were killed in the Sri Lankan government's final offensive" (30 May 2009).

In addition to aiding in the murderous anti-Tamil offensive, the "democratic" imperialist powers—the U.S., Britain,

continued on page 4

Tamils...

(continued from page 3)

Canada—have declared the LTTE a "terrorist" organisation, as has the European Union, effectively giving the Lankan regime a green light for its attacks. As we wrote in protest against the Tony Blair Labour government's Terrorism Act 2000 which outlawed the LTTE, among other organisations:

> "This Labour government has committed heinous crimes at home and abroad—from the bombing of Serbia and Iraq to drumming up anti-immigrant racism. The British state itself is an international force for terrorism—it carried out colonial massacres in Ireland, Asia and Africa—yet it brands political organisations from the Indian subcontinent and Ireland as 'terrorists.' This illustrates what British 'justice' and democracy is all about—the capitalist state is the repressive apparatus which defends the private property and rule of the bourgeoisie against the working class and oppressed."
>
> —*Workers Hammer* No. 176, Spring 2001

The roots of the decades-long Tamil insurgency lie in systematic discrimination against the Tamil people by successive Sri Lankan governments following independence from British colonial rule in 1948. The deep communal division in Sri Lanka today is itself a legacy of divide-and-rule by the British imperialists who incorporated many Tamils into the colonial administration. But following independence the Sinhalese displaced the Tamils in government service and in access to higher education. The agitation for a chauvinist "Sinhala only" language policy, led by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) in the mid-1950s, codified anti-Tamil communalism as official policy and unleashed a wave of anti-Tamil pogroms.

The national chauvinism of the Sinhalese ruling class led to growing communal polarisation that culminated in massive bloodshed in 1983 with government-inspired pogroms against the Tamils, many thousands of whom were murdered. Tamil homes and businesses in the capital, Colombo, were burnt to the ground, often with the occupants inside. Following the 1983 pogroms, orchestrated under president J.R. Jayewardene of the United National Party, we wrote:

> "The massive atrocity taking place in Sri Lanka marks a watershed in that island's history. The bloodletting and the mass population transfers have set the economy back at least a decade and are forcing the separation of the peoples. J.R. has ripped the country apart, massacring many thousands and forcing the survivors into a virtual 'bantustan' in the barren North."
>
> —"Massacre in Sri Lanka," *Spartacist* (English-language edition) No. 35, Autumn 1983

Lessons of Bitter Defeat

The dire situation of the Lankan Tamil people today is testimony to the reactionary logic of nationalism. It also confirms that under capitalism, where two peoples are interpenetrated within the same territory, the national rights of one people can only be expressed at the expense of the other people. Prior to 1983 there was considerable economical and geographic interpenetration of the Tamil and Sinhalese peoples. But the bloodletting and mass population transfers of 1983 forced a separation of the island's peoples. Tamils were increasingly compacted in the North and the East, which had been largely Tamil but had also historically been a region of mixed populations, including a substantial Muslim component. Only the overthrow of capitalism through workers revolution can lay the basis for the equitable resolution of the conflicting national claims of the peoples of Sri Lanka.

Workers Hammer

August 21: London protest against murderous oppression of Sri Lankan Tamils.

Drawing the lessons from a bitter defeat is difficult, but necessary. For Tamil (and Sinhalese) pro-working-class activists who are reeling from this massive defeat, the chief political lesson is that the programme of nationalism has proven bankrupt for the oppressed Tamils. We base ourselves on the Trotskyist programme of permanent revolution, a programme for the semicolonial countries which means the industrial and agricultural proletariat must lead all the oppressed in the struggle against semi-feudal backwardness that is the heritage of centuries of colonial subjugation, a struggle which can attain victory only through the overthrow of capitalist rule and the establishment of proletarian power.

The core of this programme is proletarian *internationalism*: a perspective for socialist revolution not only in Lanka but throughout the Indian subcontinent. Developments in Sri Lanka do not take place in isolation but are subject to developments in the international situation. The venal ruling class is beholden to the imperialist powers and the Sri Lankan economy is dependent on foreign investment and on the European Union as a market for the island's textiles. The working class—including textile workers who are mainly women, and the strategically placed "Indian Tamil" tea plantation workers in the central highlands, descendants of a deeply exploited population brought in from India as indentured labourers by the British—are class brothers and sisters of the more powerful working class in India and elsewhere. We fight for Marxist workers parties throughout South Asia that can unite the working people and oppressed in the struggle for workers revolutions which provide the only road to liberation from the poverty, oppression and national chauvinism that are endemic to capitalist rule, particularly in the neocolonies.

The authentic programme of Trotskyism is today upheld by the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). The once-Trotskyist Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) abandoned the interests of the proletariat and the defence of the Tamil people when it entered the Sinhala-chauvinist government of the SLFP in 1964. This was prefigured by the LSSP's support to the "Sinhala only" campaign against the Tamil minority. Again in the 1980s, government terror against the Tamils drew the line sharply between revolutionists and fake Trotskyists, who capitulated to Sinhala chauvinism.

At the time of the 1983 pogroms, our international tendency was virtually alone on the left in initiating and joining protests internationally in defence of the Tamils. Noting that the blood-bath had "catastrophically altered for the foreseeable future the prospects for common class struggle between the Sinhalese working class and the oppressed Tamil minority," we raised the call for the *right of Tamil Eelam*—a separate Tamil state in the North—and for a federated socialist republic of Eelam and Lanka as part of a socialist federation of South Asia.

Getty

Colombo: Sri Lankan president Mahinda Rajapaksa in "Victory Parade" marking first anniversary of crushing of Tamil resistance, June 18.

Prior to 1983 our organisation had upheld the right to Tamil self-determination while counselling against separation, arguing in favour of united working-class struggle for Tamil freedom and socialist revolution in Lanka (formerly Ceylon) and its extension through the Indian subcontinent. But as we wrote, "in the wake of the mass killing of Tamils, the bitterness and hostility between the peoples of Ceylon has evidently become insurmountable at least in the short run." While calling for the right of Tamil Eelam, we also noted: "The bloody communal struggle argues that even with proletarian revolution in Ceylon and South Asia generally, a *federated* socialist repuhlic in Ceylon will be necessary to achieve the unity of Tamils and Sinhalese on a basis of justice and equality" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 35, Autumn 1983).

At the same time we noted that the prospects for an independent Tamil capitalist state in the underdeveloped North were poor. Nor would the formation of such a state ensure the national survival of the Tamils, who were interpenetrated with the Sinhalese majority throughout much of the island. On the other hand, the establishment of a federated socialist republic of Eelam and Lanka would be a beacon to the oppressed and subjugated masses throughout the subcontinent, including among the 65 million Tamils across the Palk Strait in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

In the years of civil war that followed the 1983 pogroms, at least 70,000 civilians have been killed and hundreds of thousands of Tamils driven into exile or squalid refugee camps. The LTTE managed to compact a Tamil mini-state in parts of the North and East and eventually signed a ceasefire agreement with the Colombo government in 2002. But the Sinhalese-chauvinist army's provocations never stopped. After the 2005 election of hard-line SLFP president Mahinda Rajapaksa, who ruled out even autonomy for Tamil regions, the government abrogated the ceasefire and then withdrew from it entirely in early 2008.

Today, contrary to imperialist hype about reconciliation and a return to "stability" on the island, the Rajapaksa family oligarchy makes little effort to maintain even the trappings of "democracy," having even locked up Sarath Fonseka, who was head of the military during the war on the Tamils and who challenged Mahinda Rajapaksa for the presidency in the last election. Stable bourgeois democratic rule is not on the historic agenda in Sri Lanka, nor is a democratic resolution of the oppression of the Tamil minority. Washington's central strategic goal on the island is a stable regime that can provide access to the strategic deep-water harbour of Trincomalee in the Eastern Province.

Successive Sri Lankan governments have engaged in brutal "ethnic cleansing" and a bloody process of "Sinhalisation" has forced hundreds of thousands of Tamils to leave the area while those who remain live under a state of siege. Large tracts of land are still prohibited areas and in all likelihood Tamils will not be allowed to return to certain locations. Foreigners and journalists are still restricted from travelling to the North, where permanent military cantonments are being built on former Tamil areas. Many Tamil refugees remain in camps in the North and thousands of alleged LTTE cadres are held in camps to which relatives, aid organisations or the Red Cross have no access.

The struggle to forge a new, revolutionary party in Lanka must begin with the understanding that the eradication of national oppression and true social progress for the peoples of Lanka and the region will come when the barbaric rule of capital and the divisions inherited from imperialist domination are overturned through socialist revolution. Lasting national and class justice for the Tamil working people will be secured through rule by the workers and peasants in a socialist federation of South Asia, and the extension of proletarian revolutions into the imperialist centres. ■

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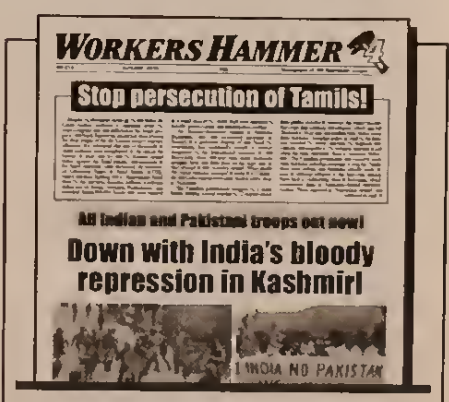

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Vote Yes on California Prop 19

OAKLAND—An initiative on the November 2 ballot in California would make the state the first in the country to legalize the sale of marijuana as well as eliminate criminal penalties for possession or use of an ounce or less by those over 21. It would make cannabis available for scientific, medical, industrial and research purposes and permit the cultivation of small amounts for personal consumption. Proposition 19, "The Regulate, Control and Tax Cannabis Act of 2010," is written narrowly to leave much of pot use illegal and concerns itself with regulating and taxing its sale. Nevertheless, a vote for Prop. 19 is an elementary expression of support for a simple democratic right: that the government keep its claws off of people's private lives.

Equally important, a vote for this initiative is a vote against the "war on drugs," which is in the main a war against black people. While blacks and whites use marijuana at close to the same rate, the arrest rate for blacks is *three times* greater nationally and ranges up to *four times* greater in California counties.

The "war on drugs" has served to greatly intensify capitalist state repression, whose daily workings include street executions by marauding cops, such as the brutal killings of Oscar Grant in Oakland last year and Manuel Jamines in Los Angeles this September. In Latin America, U.S. imperialism—under both Democratic and Republican administrations—has used the "war on drugs" as a pretext for expanding its military presence and propping up pro-U.S. regimes (see "Mexico: Down With 'Drug Wars' Militarization!" *WV* No. 953, 26 February).

Contrary to government claims, the criminalization of marijuana has never had anything to do with protecting anyone's welfare. Anti-drug laws are designed to maintain social control and regimentation of the population, providing a legal pretext to repress black people, immigrants, youth and others.

Down With the Racist "War on Drugs"!

Johansson/NY Times

Lancaster, California: Inmates jammed into gymnasium of massively overcrowded prison.

Jet

Al Sharpton marking "crack house" in 1986, providing fodder for capitalist rulers' racist "war on drugs."

Laws against marijuana were first adopted beginning in 1914 as a racist measure against Mexican immigrants in the Southwest. A federal ban in 1937 opened the era of campaigns against "reefer madness," especially targeting both blacks and Latinos. The first federal "drug czar," Harry Anslinger, captured that ban's spirit with such racist diatribes as "reefer makes darkies think they're as good as white men."

Today's plethora of drug laws are an outgrowth of the web of legal repression under the "war on crime," kicked off with Democrat Lyndon Johnson's 1968 "Safe Streets Act" and Republican Richard Nixon's 1970 "Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act." These and subsequent measures were implemented to target black militants and the ghetto poor following the upheavals against segregation, poverty and racist cop terror in the mid-to-late 1960s. Under Ronald Reagan in the 1980s, the bipartisan "war on drugs" was officially launched, centered on a racist crack cocaine witchhunt. Incarceration rates skyrocketed, especially for young black men, for whom the capitalist rulers have had increasingly little use since the devastation of unionized industrial jobs beginning in the 1970s.

Starting in the early 1990s, marijuana arrests began to shoot up as crack cocaine arrests leveled off. By 2009, annual marijuana prosecutions had reached more than 858,000. More than half of all drug arrests are for marijuana, and 46 percent of all drug arrests—nearly 760,000 a year—are for possession. U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder has made clear the government's opposition to Prop. 19, vowing that the Obama administration would "vigorously enforce" federal drug laws.

The government has no business criminalizing the personal use of *any* drug, for any purpose, regardless of its particular risks or effects. As communists, we demand an end to *all* laws against "crimes without victims," such as gambling, prostitution, drug use, pornography and all consensual sex. Likewise, we oppose "sin taxes" on activities and products the bourgeoisie deems "immoral" or unhealthy, like alcohol and tobacco.

In fact, marijuana is among the safest of non-food substances consumed by humans. Yet under the Controlled Substances Act, the Feds put it on the list of the supposedly most dangerous drugs, Schedule I, along with heroin, and ahead of Schedule II drugs like cocaine and morphine. Despite the passage of Prop. 215 in 1996, which made medical use of marijuana legal in California, the federal government did not stop persecuting a number of patients with harrowing illnesses for whom pot provided some relief.

NAACP president Alice Huffman explained why the California NAACP endorsed Prop. 19 by correctly denouncing "the so called 'war on drugs'" as "a war that disproportionately affects young men and women and the latest tool for imposing Jim Crow justice on poor African-Americans" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 16 September). For this, she has come under fire, with more than 20 black preachers and others demanding her resignation. Nate Holden, a longtime black Democratic Los Angeles politician, has come out against Prop. 19. The capitalist Democratic Party, and black elected officials in particular, have been instrumental in the anti-drug crusade. Huffman herself has endorsed Democratic state attorney general Jerry Brown for governor. Brown boasts of enforcing the racist drug laws and opposes Prop. 19. In their role of tying labor to the capitalist class enemy, the bureaucratic misleaders of almost all of California's public workers unions have also backed Brown, who promises to cut public workers pensions.

The "war on drugs" has at times been supported by large sections of working people and the oppressed who wrongly believe that cops and prisons are a means for combatting the social pathology of drug addiction and the drug trade. In fact, decriminalization, by taking the superprofits out of the drug trade, would also reduce the crime associated with it. For those who wish, any associated psychological or medical problem that may arise from drug use should be treated as a medical issue, not a criminal one. At the same time, we understand that drug addiction in the ghetto is a reflection of the hellish conditions imposed on masses of black people in this racist capitalist society. As we wrote in "Anti-Immigrant, Anti-Woman, Anti-Sex: U.S./UN Crusade Against 'Sex Trafficking'" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 58, Spring 2004):

> "Recreational drug use is nobody else's business, but widespread drug addiction and alcoholism sap the revolutionary energy of the working class and other sections of the oppressed. The social oppression that breeds alcoholism and drug addiction among the poor should be fought through the moral authority of the proletarian socialist movement, and not through state coercion."

Whipping up hysteria about drugs in the workplace, the California Chamber of Commerce opposes Prop. 19 because the measure approves only the "existing right of an employer to address consumption that actually impairs job performance"—i.e., the current norm for subjecting workers to drug tests. We oppose all workplace drug testing, which the bosses use as a pretext to frame up or target militants and cow the entire workforce.

The racism and union-busting of the "war on drugs" come together in the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program, under which port workers are branded as a "threat to national security" for offenses ranging from drug possession with intent to distribute to fraud and being an "illegal immigrant." Under TWIC, many port workers have lost their jobs, disproportionately blacks and Latinos, and including members of the largely immigrant port truckers. As the Northern California District Council of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union declared in a statement endorsing Prop. 19: "Peoples' lives are ruined for a lifetime because of criminal records incurred from using a drug that is used recreationally by people from all walks of life. Those criminal records fall disproportionately on the backs of workers, poor people, and people of color." Down with TWIC!

We support Prop. 19 as a step toward removing all laws against drug use, but we do not take a position on the particular schemes advanced by Prop. 19 to regulate the commercial production and taxation of marijuana. Moreover, we oppose the draconian measures it would mete out when it comes to youth—the other group specially targeted by drug laws—and those who provide them marijuana. These include up to seven years in prison for offering or providing pot to youth under 14, up to five years for ages 14-18 and six months for ages 18-21. Despite its weaknesses, however, if passed and actually implemented—no sure thing given federal and police hostility—Prop. 19 would eliminate a key legal pretext for state harassment and violence. ***Down with the racist and anti-labor "war an drugs"! For decriminalization of drugs! Vote yes an Prap. 19!*** ■

This pamphlet reprints presentations given by SL Central Committee member Joseph Seymour on the origins of Marxism in the French Enlightenment and in left Hegelianism. Also included are "150 Years of the Communist Manifesto" and "Marxism and Religion."

In the retrograde climate of post-Soviet reaction, the struggle to reassert the validity of the program and purpose of revolutionary Marxism is crucial for our fight for new October Revolutions.

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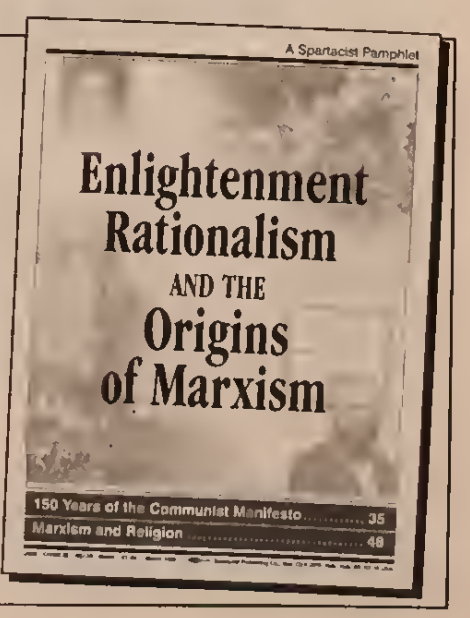


Education...

(continued from page 12)

Education Act in 1958.

A certain level of education is also necessary for industrial labor. During World War II, when there was a labor shortage and the bourgeoisie needed workers for war industries, California shipyard owners recruited untrained and often semi-literate Southemers, black as well as white, who learned to read and write, and often became skilled apprentices in little more than three months. During the war, the G.E.D. program was initiated to prepare returning servicemen who lacked a high school diploma to take jobs. It was expanded in 1963 for the general population.

While black workers have been a key component of the workforce in industry, they have also typically been the "last hired and first fired." And after the bosses took the wrecking ball to steel mills and auto plants in the North and Midwest, the govemment saw little need for the overhead expense of educating those whose labor power was no longer needed. As a result, the children of black workers in particular have been treated more and more as an expendable population. The financial titans' interest in "education reform" has nothing to do with the welfare of the poor, black and working-class kids penned up in decrepit, underfunded schools. For these kids, it's all about pushing union-free schools where longer days and a longer academic year can be required to cultivate obedient wage slaves (if needed) and foot soldiers for the American empire.

In capitalist America, which was founded on black slavery, the black population forms a specially oppressed caste stigmatized because of skin color. Separate never has been and never can be equal. Whether it is run by Barack Obama or anyone else, the capitalist system is racist to its core—from segregated housing and schools to unemployment, cop terror and mass incarceration in the name of the "war on drugs." While closing schools and hospitals, the capitalist rulers have seen fit to pay for the "overhead expense" of prison construction, on a massive scale. Poor black youth are offered the "choice" of facing death on the streets, including at the hands of the racist cops, enrolling in U.S. imperialism's wars and occupations, expecting time in jail, or, for some, a minimum-wage job.

Minority students in segregated schools across America confront conditions more suitahle for a police state than for a place of study: metal detectors, video cameras, strict hall and truancy monitoring by security guards, drug testing, locker searches. "Zero tolerance" policies have led to tens of thousands of arrests for such "crimes" as pushing, tardiness and using spitballs. Cities hire school security out of local police forces, which carry out murderous racist terror on the streets. The nearly 5,000 "School Safety Agents" and 200 armed police on duty in New York City public schools constitute the tenth-largest police force in the country. This is an "education" system that essentially treats minority youth as future criminals. The schools serve to reinforce the isolation of black youth in a society where 28 percent of black men are destined to spend time behind bars.

In his 2005 book *The Shame of the Nation: The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America*, Jonathan Kozol, an award-winning author and former Boston public school teacher, cites a study by Harvard professor Gary Orfield that powerfully documents the growing segregation of public education. Five decades after the 1954 Supreme Court *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling that overturned formal legal segregation of public schools, Northern schools are more segregated than those in the Deep South. More than two million black and Latino students attend what Kozol calls "apartheid schools," in which 99 to 100 percent of students are non-white. During the 1990s, the proportion of black students who attended majority white schools decreased to a level lower than in any year since 1968. The Supreme Court's 2007 decision throwing out school desegregation plans in Seattle and Louisville gave official sanction to those seeking to overturn some 1,000 remaining integration plans across the country.

Robert Langmuir Collection

Alexandria, Virginia, 1864: School founded during Civil War by fugitive slave and abolitionist Harriet Jacobs.

Bilingual education has also been under steady attack. In California in 1998, racist Proposition 227 required replacing bilingual programs with sink-or-swim "English immersion" classes. As we wrote in "Down With 'English Only' Racism!" (*WV* No. 688, 10 April 1998): "Those with the ability to become bilingual on their own due to privileged circumstances—e.g., those with access to private tutoring, or who come from educated households—are deemed to be an asset to the country. The rest, often from impoverished, rural families where no one is literate in any language, are to be used as superexploited, terrorized and preferably illiterate unskilled labor."

Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

It has taken tumultuous, even revolutionary struggle to extend the right to education to black people in America. It took a bloody Civil War to uproot the slave system, under which teaching slaves to read was a crime. Most of the first Southern free public schools were established following the Civil War during Radical Reconstruction, the turbulent decade of Southern interracial bourgeois democracy carried out by the freedmen and their white allies and protected by Union Army troops, many of whom were formerly enslaved. A literacy rate that was around 5 percent for black people in the 1860s rose to 40 percent in 1890. As symbols of measures toward black equality, schools were often targets of Ku Klux Klan terror.

With the Compromise of 1877 and the withdrawal of the last federal troops from the South, black people were left at the mercy of former slaveowners, now backed by Northern capital, and their murderous nightriders. Funding for black education was slashed and Jim Crow segregation eventually became the law in the South, leaving its imprint in the North as well. Nonetheless, black teachers continued to struggle against enormous hardship to operate schools for black children. In the segregated Northern ghettos that emerged following the Great Migration of black Americans to industrial centers in the early 20th century, separate and unequal schools for blacks became facts of life linked to segregation in housing.

The civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s took up the fight against segregated and inferior schools, contributing to the end of de jure segregation in the South. But under the leadership of liberals like Martin Luther King, who looked to the capitalist Democratic Party, the courts and the government, that movement could not end the de facto segregation of black people, North and South, which is rooted in the capitalist system.

Starting in reaction to the Supreme Court's *Brown* decision, massive "white flight" to private and suburban schools reinforced segregation. A crucial turning point came in the mid 1970s, when school busing was ordered in Boston—a minimal attempt to integrate its public schools. The busing plan touched off a virulent racist reaction as mobs stoned school buses carrying black kids. The court-ordered plan was limited to neighborhoods like South Boston, one of the poorest white areas in the U.S. outside of Appalachia, and the black Roxbury ghetto. Liberal Massachusetts Congressmen, for their part, made sure that nobody was bused out to the relatively privileged suburban schools, further fueling the racist frenzy. The Spartacist League called to defend the busing plan and extend it to the suburbs. We agitated for the integrated labor movement—

Novosti

4 October 1957: Soviet Union launches Sputnik satellite into outer space. Fear of Soviet lead in military technology sparked last major investment in science education in the U.S.

Where's the Kryptonite?

The premise of the newly released—and much hyped—documentary *Waiting for "Superman"* is the director's "discovery" that the real cause of the ghastly performance of American public schools is...the teachers! Directed by Davis Guggenheim, who also directed Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* and the biographical film about Barack Obama made for the 2008 Democratic National Convention, this lavishly produced anti-union propaganda piece has been hailed by the bourgeois press and politicians internationally, including Barack Obama, who endorsed it as "heartbreaking" and "powerful."

This screed argues that if teachers had no protection against firing, U.S. schools would perform as well as those in Finland, which are rated first intemationally in math and science. Guggenheim neglects to mention that Finnish teachers are unionized and have tenure, in addition to state-funded training programs, high salaries and short school days—all fine by us.

The film promotes the non-union charter school operator Harlem Children's Zone as a model. At Harlem Children's Zone schools, students' standardized test scores are above New York City's average in math. One way these schools raised math test scores was by dismissing an entire grade of students for not performing well enough! Although Guggenheim insists that school performance has nothing to do with funding, money has everything to do with Harlem Children's Zone, where spending dwarfs that at NYC public schools. Two-thirds of the charter's $84 million operating budget comes from private donations.

One of the film's heroes is Michelle Rhee, who as Washington, D.C., schools chancellor all hut gutted union rights and protections, backed in this effort by Mayor Adrian Fenty. Rhee is portrayed as the champion of black school kids and their parents for her offensive against "incompetent" (read: unionized) teachers. In fact, it was mainly black teachers and black neighborhood schools that got the ax under Rhee, whose restructuring effort touched off a sharp racial polarization in the city. Rhee resigned on October 13 after Fenty lost a Democratic primary election, one of a numher of officials across the country who have been booted out in reaction to their attacks on public schools and unions.

As president of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), Randi Weingarten is the film's main villain, despite the enormous concessions she helped to extract from the union, including hy personally intervening to negotiate the contract in D.C. that caved in to Rhee's demands. Weingarten's response to the anti-union frenzy in the press has been to stress how much effort the AFT has put into "trying to reform"—including by giving up seniority protections, expediting firings and embracing charter schools. This craven prostration only further endangers teachers and schools. What is needed is a class-struggle fight to defend union protections and for quality, integrated public education for everyone.

Anarchists Unite with Big Brother Against Reds

Hampshire College

The following letter by the New York Spartacus Youth Club was submitted to the Climax *newspaper at Western Massachusetts' Hampshire College on October 11.*

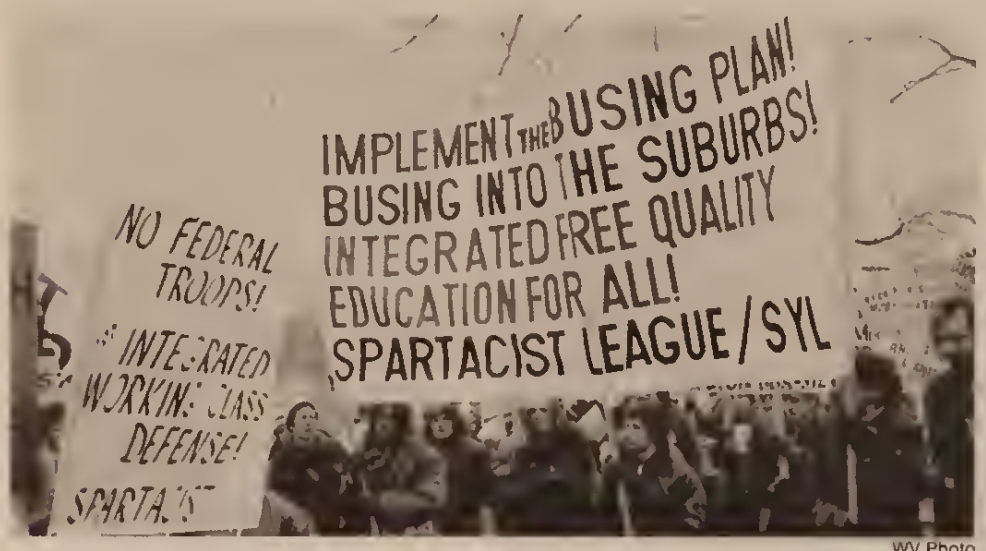
On September 7, Hampshire College's self-appointed speech police struck a blow for censorship. When the Spartacus Youth Club brought our revolutionary Marxist newspaper *Workers Vanguard* to campus, a group of "politically correct" self-described anarchists waged a two-day campaign to kick us off. These junior McCarthys showed their "anti-authoritarian" credentials by crying to the campus administration, which was only too happy to revoke our permit for a literature table. Our purported "crime" was being communists who engage in political debate. These anarchists smeared us as "racist," "transphobic" and "anti-gay" for trying to argue with one of them about capitalism, because the student in question was a transgender "person of color." This argument is as transparently false as it is paternalistic.

Only genuinely anti-gay and racist forces, who seek to silence all opposition, benefit from such idiotic and cowardly censorship. Does this clot seek to suppress the speech of religious groups, the Green Party or Democrats canvassing for votes—who we think have every right to express their views—or only the reds? Those groups seek to uphold the system of capitalist exploitation. We want to do away with it. The revolutionary movement has a proud tradition—which we uphold—of scathing arguments and polemics. It is through such clashes of opinion that one actually learns something.

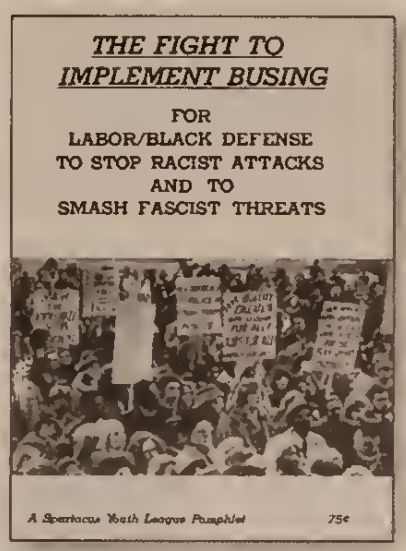
Against the liberal idea of these lifestyle anarchists that one's personal sexual identity can alter the oppressive conditions of capitalist society, we understand that liberation is a material act that requires changing the conditions that people live in. Like women's oppression, the oppression of homosexuals is rooted in the institution of the family, which is fundamental to capitalist society. To do away with all forms of oppression engendered by capitalism, we put forward a Marxist program for socialist revolution. The racist U.S. ruling class pushes every kind of chauvinism and bigotry to divide working people and the oppressed. We fight to win students to become partisans of the working class and to help forge a multiracial workers party that will act as a "tribune of the people," championing the cause of all the oppressed, crucially fighting to achieve black liberation through revolutionary integration in a socialist society. This is what the Hampshire anarchists don't want you to hear!

We fight against race and class privilege in education. The administration is the capitalists' agent on campus—as shown by its vicious ongoing campaign against the unionization of campus workers. We say: Nationalize Hampshire and abolish the administration! For the campuses to be run by those who go to school and work there! We fight for open admissions and no tuition with a state-paid living stipend so poor and working-class students can attend college. Open up elite $50,000-a-year Hampshire to the black, immigrant, poor and working-class people of the area, including Springfield!

We urge those students opposed to political censorship to protest to Hampshire Dean of Students Dawn Ellinwood at (413) 559-5412 or dellinwood@hampshire.edu. Check out our Web site: www.spartacist.org!



WV Photo



Boston, 1974: Spartacists fought for labor/black mobilizations to defend busing for school integration. Spartacus Youth League pamphlet *The Fight to Implement Busing*, $1.50 (photocopy), can be ordered from: Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.

meatpackers, bus drivers, teachers and others—to organize labor/black defense of the bused black schoolchildren.

In Boston, the liberals caved in to the racist mobs, ushering in decades of attacks on school desegregation nationwide. Even tokenistic affirmative action programs in higher education have been drastically curtailed, to the point that they barely exist outside of some elite universities. Today's education reformers have adopted the racist code word "school choice," which, in the period of the civil rights movement, meant allowing white students to attend all-white public schools and creating all-white private academies, aided by state grants to students' families. Foreshadowing the policies pursued by George W. Bush and Barack Obama was the school voucher system, which also served to perpetuate racist discrimination.

A defining trait of the race and class inequality woven into the fiber of the U.S. public school system is the role of local taxes in education funding. The wealth or poverty of a particular school district essentially determines the quality of its schools. Predominantly white suburban schools often spend twice what urban school districts do and three times what poorer rural areas spend. And when they find government funding insufficient, donors in wealthier areas shell out the cash for reading specialists, music and arts, science labs and computers as well as the extracurricular field trips and activities that make for a quality learning environment.

Decades ago, the Spartacus Youth League, forerunner to today's Spartacus Youth Clubs, explained:

> "As socialists, we oppose all class-biased and racially discriminatory privileges in educational opportunity. Thus, we are opposed to educational funding based on local property taxes. Instead, we call for all public schools to be funded at the national level. In addition, all social services—from welfare to health care—should be federally funded."
>
> —"Public Education: Separate and Unequal," *Young Spartacus* No. 52, March 1977

The Spartacist League/SYCs fight to extend the right to education to the university level, demanding open admissions, no tuition, a state-paid living stipend for students and the nationalization of private universities.

The fight for equality in education must also include a struggle against the wretched condition in the ghettos and barrios and in impoverished rural areas as well. How can you be expected to study when you're homeless or hungry, when your families live in fear of immigration raids or are stuck in overcrowded, rat-infested projects?

While fighting against discrimination and segregation in schools and housing, we understand that racial oppression cannot be rooted out short of the revolutionary overturn of the capitalist system. Like winning jobs for all, eradicating race and class bias in education, so that everyone can have access to the quality education that the children of the bourgeoisie get, requires the working class taking power. The road to black liberation and the emancipation of all the oppressed lies in the fight for an egalitarian socialist society, where production is organized to serve human need, not the capitalists' bottom line.

Laissez-Faire Schools Disaster

Some of America's biggest billionaires and venture capitalists have joined with the bourgeois press and Democratic Party hacks in a propaganda offensive aimed at pushing through anti-union school "reform." The moneybags include hedge-fund managers tied to Joe Williams, whose political action committee Democrats for Education Reform was set up to push charter schools, as well as the foundations of Microsoft mogul Bill Gates, union-busting Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton and Eli Broad, who got his billions in housing, insurance and savings rackets.

For these capitalist profiteers, the crux of education reform is the application of "free market" principles. This scheme dates back to the 1950s and right-wing economist and longtime University of Chicago professor Milton Friedman. Friedman's "Chicago Boys" gained notoriety by serving as economic advisers to the CIA-backed Chilean dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, which overthrew the popular-front government of Salvador Allende in 1973 and massacred 30,000 workers, peasants and leftists, and imprisoned and tortured thousands more. Once he retired from the University of Chicago, Friedman wrote *Free to Choose*, a playbook for market-based reform, including privatized schooling, and became an adviser to President Ronald Reagan.

Kamber/NY Times

Kennedy High School in the Bronx. Students are treated like prisoners in inner-city schools across the country.

Today's "Chicago Boys"—Obama, Education Secretary Arne Duncan and their pals—share Friedman's ideological commitment to "free market" education, embracing privatization, tying funding to test scores and ending union protections like tenure for teachers. An early implementer of this union-busting program was Diane Ravitch, an influential historian and education policy wonk who served in the Bush Senior and Clinton administrations. Ravitch has since had second thoughts. From the standpoint of wanting to further America's national interests, Ravitch's book *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* (2010) laments how the laissez-faire market approach of what she calls "the billionaire boys' club" has gutted government-run education.

As Ravitch documents, turning out higher test scores has become the top priority for financially shaky schools, taking over the school day and spilling over into weekend classes and extra tutoring. Jonathan Kozol aptly describes how "inner-city kids are being trained to give prescripted answers and to acquiesce in their subordinate position in society" (*Huffington Post*, 10 September 2007). Another result is the large-scale falsification of test scores.

The drive to improve test scores or face the ax also puts pressure on schools to get rid of their lowest-scoring students. This process has been expedited by the closing of large "failing" schools and the opening of small facilities in their place, with the lowest-scoring students shunted off to resource-starved and decrepit schools apart from better-scoring students. What we said about Bush Senior's education reforms is as much the point today: "Just test rich and poor 'equally,' and when the poor flunk, well then, that supposedly proves the ruling class shouldn't waste its money on the swelling ranks of the underclass"

continued on page 8

Education...

(continued from page 7)

("Education U.S.A.—Separate and Unequal," *WV* No. 544, 7 February 1992).

The Charter School Onslaught

The keystone of the current "reform" package is the mushrooming of charter schools. While part of local school systems, charters are privately owned and operated outfits that take money away from existing public schools and are exempt from Department of Education regulations, as well as from any union contract carried over from the school systems. Some are explicitly operated as money-making ventures, and some are religion-based schools in everything but name.

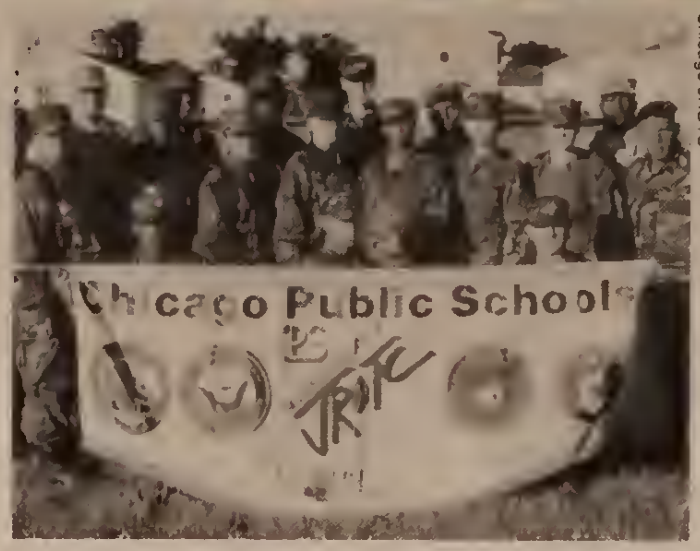
Charter schools increase racial segregation and class inequality in education and also serve as a tool to smash unions. As a rule, charter schools are opened in the poorest and most segregated parts of cities, often on public school grounds. The better-off white suburban schools remain untouched. Usually, the new schools are even more segregated than the ones they replace. According to a February 2010 study by the UCLA Civil Rights Project, nearly three out of four black charter school students attend "intensely segregated" schools where 90 percent or more of the students are minorities. This is two times higher than the rate at regular public schools.

The proliferation of charter schools has certainly done nothing to integrate schools in Chicago, long known as "Segregation City." Before landing in Washington, Arne Duncan ran the Chicago public school system from 2001 to 2008. By his own account, he oversaw the closing of some 60 schools, primarily in black and Latino neighborhoods, and the expansion of charter and military schools.

It says a lot that the Obama administration has taken the dilapidated and segregated Chicago system as a national model. Only about half of its students graduate high school; the rate is even lower for black male students. In a city that is nearly 40 percent white, white students make up just 8 percent of public school students, and a third of the public schools have not even one single white student enrolled. In 2009, the capitalist courts ended the 1980 consent decree that provided whatever shreds of integration existed in Chicago public schools, primarily in the magnet and selective schools. The decree imposed by the federal government has now been deemed unnecessary because the "vestiges of discrimination" have been eliminated "to the extent practicable"!

From 2004, when Duncan brought out his Renaissance 2010 education blueprint, to the present, over 80 Chicago public schools, largely in minority neighborhoods, have been shut down and replaced with smaller schools—about two-thirds of them charter schools. Charters now comprise 10 percent of the city school system, and almost all are non-union. The system's current "CEO" (the actual title), ex-cop and former Chicago Transit Authority president Ron Huberman, has continued Duncan's "turnaround schools" plan, under which all teachers and staff at "low-performing" schools are fired and replaced by much younger, less experienced teachers who receive far lower wages. Across the country, idealistic young college graduates, mainly white, are being recruited and given a pro forma training course for exactly this purpose by Teach for America and the New Teacher Project, which are supported by the Gates, Broad and Walton foundations. Many new hires burn out quickly—in Chicago it's common that they don't even get through their first school year.

Many black and Latino parents turn to charter schools hoping that they provide an alternative to the decaying inner-city public schools. Schools like Harlem Success Academy are touted as miracle stories, where the black-white "achievement gap" is supposed to be a thing of the past and "behavior problems" are rooted out (including through its "kindergarten boot camp"!). In order to raise standardized test scores, Harlem Success spends hundreds of thousands every year to recruit the students it wants while pressuring those who score low to transfer elsewhere. It offers no teachers of English as a Second Language and no classes for students with disabilities. Eva Moskowitz, CEO of Harlem Success, coldly told one teacher, "The school is not a social service agency" (*New York* magazine, 25 April).



Chicago JROTC

More than 9,000 Chicago students are enrolled in programs and schools run by the military, the most in any U.S. city. As CEO of Chicago Public Schools, Arne Duncan expanded military presence.

Belying the hype over such "successful" charters lies a stark fact: charter schools do not even measure up to public schools. According to a 2009 Stanford University study, 46 percent of charter schools perform comparably to public schools—and 37 percent perform significantly *worse*. Examples of financial skimming and haywire accounting abound. Of the 64 schools in Los Angeles that have had their charters revoked, almost all were accused of financial or administrative mismanagement.

Charter schools represent a major erosion of the separation of church and state supposedly enshrined in the Constitution. A case in point is Chicago, where the parochial school system is already the largest in the world and has long functioned as an escape from integration for white families. Sister Mary Paul McCaughey, superintendent of Chicago Catholic Schools, recently announced that a number of their schools may be converted into charters. In Washington, D.C., seven low-performing Catholic schools became charters on archdiocese property, which, like all church property, is exempt from taxation. We oppose government funding for any religious institution, including schools, and fight as well against any encroachment of religious teaching into the public schools, such as the attempt to promote "intelligent design" at the expense of teaching the *fact* of evolution.

In a chilling sign of how the administration's "reform" schemes will further depress the quality of education, earlier this year Education Secretary Arne Duncan ghoulishly declared that Hurricane Katrina was "the best thing that happened to the education system in New Orleans"! The racist rulers viewed the unfolding disaster of Hurricane Katrina as an opportunity to "change the demographics" of New Orleans—i.e., get rid of impoverished blacks. In addition to terrorizing the black population, boarding up public housing and axing social services, this meant gutting public education. One of black Democratic mayor Ray Nagin's first acts after the floodwaters drained was to fire all 8,000 unionized schoolteachers in an all-out drive to replace public schools with charters. Two-thirds of the city's children are now enrolled in charter schools.

Obscenely, the Brookings Institution think tank has declared that Haiti should follow the New Orleans model, which, it opines, shows how "a fundamentally different education system can be built in the wake of a disaster." *Nothing* is being rebuilt as the desperately impoverished Haitian masses continue to groan under imperialist subjugation, carried out through the UN occupation force supplemented by U.S. National Guardsmen.

Mario García Joya

Members of Havana youth literacy brigades in 1961. After overthrow of capitalism, Cuba achieved one of highest literacy rates in the world.

Before the earthquake, the vast majority of schools in Haiti were private, and more than half of school-age children did not attend school. Next door in the Dominican Republic, free public elementary education is well-established in the cities, although less so in the rural areas. The contrasting results are stark: the literacy rate in the Dominican Republic is 85 percent; in Haiti it's 53 percent. Even so, the situation in the neocolonial Dominican Republic pales in comparison to that in Cuba, a bureaucratically deformed workers state. Since the overthrow of capitalist rule in 1960-61, Cuba has achieved one of the highest literacy rates in the world—higher than the U.S.—as well as the highest doctor-patient ratio.

The War on Teachers Unions

America's capitalist rulers and their media mouthpieces are seeking to manipulate justified anger over the state of public education to bolster their attacks on overworked and underpaid teachers and their unions. Obama & Co. seek to reverse gains for teachers, whose unions grew substantially through a series of labor struggles in the 1950s and '60s. Before that, they had little protection against meager salaries, political favoritism, domineering principals and sex discrimination against a mostly female workforce.

In mid August, the *Los Angeles Times*, which for over a century has specialized in bashing unions, ran a series of attack pieces on the United Teachers of Los Angeles. The paper published a database rating some 6,000 elementary school teachers by the test scores of their students, promoting this as a tool for firing teachers—an approach endorsed by both Arne Duncan and Democratic California Education Secretary Bonnie Reiss. This witchhunt has since been implicated in the suicide of Rigoberto Ruelas, a dedicated teacher from an impoverished district in South Los Angeles where students scored lower on tests than those in more affluent neighborhoods.

In many public schools, if students get any education at all, it is testament to the dedication of poorly paid teachers who struggle against cutbacks, decaying facilities and increased administration meddling. With the government refusing to shell out for the most basic classroom materials, some teachers spend thousands of dollars of their own money on school supplies.

There is plenty of anger among the membership of the teachers unions over the attacks on their wages and job protections, and over the state of public education. In California, the Oakland Education Association went out on April 29 for a one-day strike against wage freezes, although its members continue to work without a contract. On October 14, Baltimore teachers voted down a contract that would have effectively gutted seniority. But the unions are saddled with a leadership that acts as labor statesmen for the capitalist government, willingly offering up greater concessions from their members in the name of "sacrificing for the kids."

The union tops' class collaborationism is all the more blatant with the Democratic Party, which they falsely promote as the friend of labor and the oppressed, running things. In the last 30 years, the teachers unions have shelled out nearly $57.4 million to bourgeois politicians in federal elections alone, 95 percent of that to Democrats. Ten percent of the delegates to the Democratic National Convention in 2008 were teachers union members. Under Obama, the Democratic Party has put itself in the front lines of the anti-teacher offensive. Republican Congressman John Kline pointed out (*New York Times*, 1 September) that many of Obama and Duncan's ideas have been pushed by Republicans for years. The union tops' support for the Democrats makes their realization possible. As the *Times* reported, Kline told Duncan, "Arne, only you can do that.... You're the secretary of education for a Democratic president."

AFT president Randi Weingarten, formerly the head of NYC's United Federation of Teachers (UFT), exemplifies the role the labor bureaucracy plays as the bosses' cops inside the unions. Weingarten's mentor, longtime AFT head Albert Shanker, was a raving anti-Communist who acted as one of U.S. imperialism's main labor agents in its drive to smash militant unions and suppress left-wing parties around the world during the anti-Soviet Cold War. Weingarten backs charter schools and various types of "performance pay," in line with Obama's calls for "more accountability" from teachers. No wonder that Duncan told the *New York Times Magazine* (19 September), "I'm a big fan of Randi's." This, to say the least, is not the opinion of AFT members who booed and heckled her at a May union meeting in Detroit. Weingarten's successor at the UFT, Michael Mulgrew, has played his part by agreeing to link teachers' evaluations to standardized test scores and to make it easier to fire teachers whom administrators deem "incompetent."

We Need a Workers Party!

In our articles denouncing Obama's vaunted health care package—a gift to the bankers and insurance companies—we made the point that if the labor movement fought for free, universal, quality health care, it would have broad support among the population, helping to revitalize the trade unions in this country. Similarly, if the teachers unions waged some class struggle in support of free, quality education for all, they would find allies

Afghanistan...

(continued from page 1)

operate out of a string of bases along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, often using extreme ruthlessness against the civilian population. One report of a "home breach" speaks of an Afghan man who was "injured" when Afghan paramilitaries carried out the "traumatic amputation of fingers" on his left hand. Private Bradley Manning, who was stationed in Iraq, has been accused of downloading classified information and faces the threat of court-martial. Whether or not Private Manning was involved, the release of this data, far from being a crime, was a useful and brave act of solidarity with those suffering under the imperialist boot. We demand: Release Private Manning and drop the charges against him!

The U.S. air attacks in Pakistan have unleashed a wellspring of anger among all classes of the Pakistani population. While the increasing Predator drone attacks, run by the CIA out of military bases in Pakistan, have been carried out with the tacit approval of the military-backed regime, manned cross-border air strikes openly targeting Pakistani soldiers are something else again. Those attacks reportedly came after the Pakistani government turned a deaf ear to a demand by its imperialist patrons in Washington that it launch a military offensive in the North Waziristan tribal area against forces accused of fighting U.S./NATO troops in Afghanistan. At the insistence of Pakistan's military chiefs, Islamabad retaliated by temporarily closing a key border crossing at the Khyber Pass. While U.S. military supplies were allowed to transit through a different border crossing, more than 100 supply trucks caught in the eleven-day traffic jam at the Khyber Pass were torched by Islamic insurgents.

Washington's drive to carry the war into Pakistan's northwestern tribal areas, a stronghold of the Taliban and other Islamic insurgents, comes as U.S./NATO forces have manifestly lost control of the military situation in Afghanistan. Despite Obama's touted "surge" of troop levels, a highly publicized offensive early this year against rural Marja in southern Afghanistan collapsed after U.S. Marines proved unable to uproot Taliban control of the area. Following that setback, the military brass stepped back from a planned offensive in Kandahar that, they had previously boasted, would break the back of Taliban power in the country's second-largest city. That operation finally got underway recently to little fanfare, as chastened U.S. generals cautioned their Commander-in-Chief not to expect "significant" progress before his scheduled year-end status review on Afghanistan.

AFP

NATO oil tankers en route to Afghanistan torched by insurgents in Pakistan.

Following the Marja setback, the Obama administration let it be known that it was "revising its Afghanistan strategy to embrace the idea of negotiating with senior members of the Taliban" (London *Guardian*, 19 July). This policy did not sit well with many in U.S. ruling circles, with CIA chief Leon Panetta asking what the point of negotiations was if Islamic insurgents were not convinced "that they're going to be defeated."

The U.S./NATO occupation has meant unbridled corruption by Washington's quislings in Kabul, continued brutal oppression of women and warfare among the various tribal warlords. As revolutionary Marxists, our starting point is proletarian class opposition to the U.S. rulers and the capitalist-imperialist system as a whole. Insofar as the forces on the ground in Afghanistan and Iraq aim their blows against the imperialist occupiers, we call for their military defense while maintaining our political opposition to these forces, in the main Islamic fundamentalist. We call for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. and allied troops and bases from Iraq, Afghanistan and Central Asia and demand as well: Hands off Pakistan and Iran!

As we have repeatedly stressed, the chief means of defending neocolonial Afghanistan and Iraq against the overwhelming military might of the U.S. and its allies lies in international working-class struggle, especially by the multiracial American proletariat. The bourgeoisie's relentless drive for profits necessarily results in neocolonial pillage and wars. Only by wresting the means of production from the hands of the capitalist rulers and creating an international planned economy can the needs of the working people in this country, and of the billions of toilers around the world who are now consigned to hideous poverty, begin to be met. Against the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy, which swears allegiance to U.S. imperialism's "national interests," we fight to forge a workers party that will lead the exploited and oppressed in socialist revolution.

For a Socialist Federation of South Asia

By increasingly ratcheting up their military intervention in Pakistan, the U.S. imperialists are intensifying the contradictions that are tearing at the fabric of that society and could well lead to the disintegration of that nuclear-armed state. Pakistan, like India, is a product of centuries of British colonial divide-and-rule domination culminating in the 1947 partition of the Indian subcontinent and the accompanying orgy of communalist slaughter among Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs.

Today, the same arrogant and brutal Punjabi ruling class that was carried over from British colonial rule lords it over Baluchis, Pashtuns and other oppressed nationalities in Pakistan. This "prison house of peoples" is held together through stark repression meted out by the army, which has ruled directly throughout most of Pakistan's history. While the landed aristocracy, textile bosses and upper echelons of the military plunder the country's wealth, the desperate poverty of the laboring masses can be gauged by the fact that fully 60 percent of children are stunted—many severely—by malnutrition.

It was against this backdrop that Pakistan was hit in August and September by massive flooding of the Indus River, which engulfed a fifth of the country's surface—an area half the size of Italy—and left a staggering 20 million people homeless. The government largely left flood victims to fend for themselves, while the notoriously corrupt president Asif Zardari went on a pleasure junket to his French chateau. As for relief offered by the U.S. military, with most Pakistanis viewing the U.S. as an enemy, Islamabad imposed tight constraints: American troops delivering aid were not allowed to carry guns, and relief flights by military cargo planes over Pakistani territory were eventually ordered to cease. Meanwhile, with the country still reeling from the effects of the deluge, several Pakistani cities were hit with renewed sectarian terrorism, including a September 3 attack on Shi'ites in Quetta that left 73 people dead.

While many of Pakistan's textile factories have been mothballed due to the global economic crisis, Pakistan has a significant working class, one with a history of combative class struggle. The task of liberating all the exploited and oppressed of the Indian subcontinent demands the forging of Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard parties dedicated to the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisies in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh and the establishment of a socialist federation of South Asia. Only an internationalist perspective, uniting class and other social struggles on the subcontinent with the fight for workers revolution in the U.S. and other advanced capitalist countries, can open the door to liberation for the impoverished masses, which will be achieved through the building of a socialist world order. ■

Washington/NY Times

Teachers union head Randi Weingarten in 2002 with NYC mayor Michael Bloomberg, who went on to lead drive against union, public schools.

in millions of working-class, black and Latino families. When teachers unions have gone on strike in cities like Chicago, Los Angeles and Oakland, they have won support in the ghettos and barrios. To mobilize the unions in such struggle requires fighting against the class collaborationism of the labor bureaucracy, which places its reliance on phony "friends" in the bourgeois government.

In the same camp as the labor sellouts, the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO) complained in an article by Gillian Russom in *International Socialist Review* (May-June 2010): "Education should be at the center of a national debate on social priorities, led by a president who promised 'change.' Instead, the economic crisis is being used by the White House to dramatically accelerate a neoliberal agenda for education." This is simply the language of disappointed suitors, as seen in an exchange among ISO leaders over just how low to bow before the imperialist Commander-in-Chief, whose election the ISO hailed (see article, page 2). Earlier, the ISO's *Socialist Worker* (2 November 2009) offered that a "real 'Race to the Top' program" could "start by taking the largely taxpayer-funded $23 billion in bonuses that Goldman Sachs is giving out this year, and put that money toward giving nearly 6 million families that $4,000 income supplement." Or, as Oliver Twist begged, "Please, Sir, I want some more."

The labor bureaucracy and the reformist left seek to obscure the understanding that this is a *capitalist government*, whose purpose, as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels instructed over 150 years ago, is to be the executive committee of the ruling class as a whole. Following the years of George W. Bush, the Obama administration was put into office to provide a much-needed facelift for U.S. imperialism in order to further its predatory interests abroad and grind down the working class, blacks and immigrants at home. While handing out billions to bankers and auto bosses, Obama has appealed to everyone else to embrace a "spirit of sacrifice." Meanwhile, he repeats the disgusting tirade that crumbling schools and poverty are "no excuses" for the black masses and that "hardships will just make you stronger." Enough! We say: Break with the Democrats! For a workers party that fights for a workers government!

After escaping slavery and educating himself as a fighter in the left wing of the abolitionist movement, Frederick Douglass observed that, in the eyes of the slaveholders, to educate a man "would forever unfit him to be a slave." The logic of this statement remains unchanged a century and a half later. To give all people the means to attain their full creative potential requires overturning the present social order, based on the exploitation of labor, vicious racial oppression and grinding poverty. Only after a multiracial workers party leads the proletariat, at the head of all the oppressed, in overthrowing the decaying capitalist system and constructing an egalitarian socialist society will mankind be freed of the fetters of scarcity and want, and real human history will begin. ■

Spartacus Youth Club Events

CHICAGO

Wednesday, Oct. 27, 6:30 p.m.

Black History and the Class Struggle:
For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

University of Illinois
at Chicago
African American Cultural Center
Addams Hall
Gallery Room 207
830 S. Halsted Street
(take Blue Line—UIC Halsted stop)

Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
chicagosyc@sbcglobal.net

VANCOUVER

Wednesday, Nov. 3, 6:30 p.m.

The Russian Revolution: How the Working Class Took Power

University of British Columbia
Student Union Building
Room 212

Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
trotskyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

Visit the ICL Web Site:
www.icl-fi.org

NEW YORK CITY

Wednesday, Oct. 27, 7 p.m.

The Russian Revolution and the Fight for New Octobers

CCNY, Room NAC 1-211A
138th St. and Amsterdam Ave.
(1 train to 137th—City College)

Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
nysl@tiac.net

LOS ANGELES

Wednesday, Nov. 10, 6 p.m.

Over 160 Years of the *Communist Manifesto*
Workers of the World, Unite!

UCLA, Rolfe Hall, Room 3131

Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
slsycla@sbcglobal.net

TORONTO

Wednesday, Oct. 27, 6 p.m.

Revolution vs. Reform: Smash the Capitalist State!

University of Toronto, OISE
(Ontario Institute for Studies in Education)
252 Bloor St. West, Room 4420

Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
spartcan@on.aibn.com

Elections...

(continued from page 1)

struggles, sometimes massive. These have been directed against capitalist governments of both the right, such as Sarkozy's in France, and the left, such as Zapatero's Socialist party regime in Spain. As we go to press, a national day of action is taking place in France, where strikes and protests mainly against attacks on pensions have recently drawn in public employees, oil refinery workers and truck drivers as well as working-class and minority high school youth. But the workers' reformist misleaders are simultaneously pushing virulent economic protectionism, which binds the workers and their unions to "their own" ruling classes, whipping up racist reaction against immigrants and dividing workers along national lines. That program disarms the workers, blocking the road to the only way out of capitalism's ruinous boom-bust cycles: proletarian revolution, leading to a Socialist United States of Europe.

In this country, the anti-immigrant drums are pounded not only by the Republicans but also by the chauvinist trade-union bureaucracy and the Democratic Party in which it invests its members' dues and political activity. The Obama administration has exceeded the Bush White House in carrying out deportations and sent even more troops to the Mexican border. As Marxists, we call for the unions to mobilize in defense of immigrants, demanding full citizenship rights for all immigrants. Labor must fight to organize the unorganized, not least in the open shop South, which requires a hard struggle against entrenched black oppression as well as anti-immigrant bigotry. A new, class-struggle labor leadership would link the struggles of workers in the U.S. to those in Latin America and beyond under the call raised by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the 1848 *Communist Manifesto*: Workers of the world, unite!

Even by the government's minimizing standard, the number of Americans living in poverty today is the highest since Washington started keeping such statistics 50 years ago. There is no "recovery" for the record numbers of people suffering long-term unemployment. The federal, state and local governments are slashing services to the bone, hitting hardest at the poor. There is a desperate need for *class struggle*, placing a revived labor movement at the head of the ghetto and barrio masses in a fight against the common capitalist class enemy.

Such struggle needs a political expression: a workers party organized independently of, and in opposition to, the Democratic and Republican parties of capital. The U.S. is the only advanced capitalist country without a party of the working class, even one with a reformist leadership. The lack of this basic level of class consciousness is based in the main on the ethnic, religious and, especially, racial divisions in the working class that have historically been fostered by the capitalists: native-born against foreign-born, white against black.

The Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs aim to win working-class militants, anti-racist fighters and revolutionary-minded youth to the perspective of forging a workers party that fights for a workers government. The bloody imperialist carnage in Afghanistan and elsewhere, the drive to extract ever more profit from workers' labor, the grinding oppression of black people, the all-round social bigotry—all these are part of a *system* of capitalist rule. Only when that system is destroyed root and branch by victorious workers revolution—when the capitalist state is smashed and replaced by a workers state—will the proletariat and the oppressed be emancipated.

AFP

WV Photo

October 2 "One Nation" rally called by AFL-CIO tops, NAACP in Washington, D.C., to mobilize votes for Democrats in midterm elections. "Socialist Contingent" and rest of reformist left supported rally, which was backed by the Commander-in-Chief himself.

Elections 2010: Starving Workers, Bashing China

V.I. Lenin, leader of the Russian October Revolution, wrote in his 1918 polemic, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*: "Bourgeois democracy, although a great historical advance in comparison with medievalism, always remains, and under capitalism is bound to remain, restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich and a snare and deception for the exploited, for the poor." The satirist Juvenal coined the term "panem et circenses" (bread and circuses) in tracing the decline of the Roman Republic and the rise of the Roman Empire, with its spectacles of gladiator combat and showering of bread upon the plebeian masses. In American imperialism's decline, they're withholding the bread but giving us the spectacle of electoral circuses.

Who cannot find the "I'm not a witch" ad by Delaware Republican Christine O'Donnell hilarious in a sick way, or find the Nazi "re-enactor," Ohio Republican and Tea Party favorite Rich Iott, a grotesque insult to just about anyone but a card-carrying fascist? Who did not recoil in horror at New York Republican gubernatorial candidate Carl Paladino's rant against gay people, fresh on the heels of a rash of suicides by gay youth and the horrific torture of gays by a gang in the Bronx?

All this may give ammunition to the Democrats, the supposed "friends of labor" and the downtrodden. But the writer Gore Vidal, one of the most incisive American political and social commentators, put it well in an interview with TV host Bill Maher in April 2009:

> "There is only one party in the United States, the Property Party...and it has two right wings: Republican and Democrat. Republicans are a bit stupider, more rigid, more doctrinaire in their laissez-faire capitalism than the Democrats, who are cuter, prettier, a bit more corrupt—until recently...and more willing than the Republicans to make small adjustments when the poor, the black, the anti-imperialists get out of hand. But, essentially, there is no difference between the two parties."

In Obama's version of this picture, when racist yahoos "get out of hand" he bends over backward to accommodate them, as seen in the firing of black Department of Agriculture official Shirley Sherrod after a Tea Party operative concocted a lying story of her "racist" treatment of a white farmer (see: "Shirley Sherrod Thrown Under the Bus—Ohama: CEO of Racist American Capitalism," *WV* No. 963, 27 August).

Faced with this "choice," much of the Democrats' historic base might well sit this one out. So up step the craven union "leaders" and the likes of the NAACP to rally support from the workers, black masses and youth for the "lesser evil" of the Democratic Party. Teamsters Local 237 president Gregory Floyd put it succinctly in New York's *Amsterdam News* (7 October):

> "We cannot allow misguided voters to change the course of history this November. Every voter who supports public policies that promote broad-based prosperity and equality must understand that not voting is the same as voting for the other side.
>
> "We must take our own anger—our passion—to the polls and make sure we protect people with the interests of our community at heart. We are also angry, but we must show that emotion by storming the polls and demonstrating that we are truly one nation working together."

As Barack Obama has made clear in hitting the campaign trail, the aim is to rekindle the "spirit" of 2008, when the elections placed the first black president in the White House. The truth is that the plight of the black masses, like that of the working class in general, has demonstrably worsened on Obama's watch. There is no mystery here. The race-color caste oppression of black people has always been a defining feature of American capitalism. Compare black incarceration in prison hellholes with black university attendance, now even more attenuated by the economic crisis and the last gasps of affirmative action; compare the massive level of black youth unemployment with any other sector of the population; look at the daily cop terror in the ghettos. It will take a third American revolution, a socialist revolution, to fully emancipate the black masses, a revolution in which black workers are destined to play a leading role.

Having overseen the continued hemorrhaging of jobs and slashing of social services, the Democrats are dishing out a heavier dose than usual of national chauvinist poison, especially the anti-Communist type directed against China, a bureaucratically deformed workers state. While both capitalist parties bash China, it's the Democrats who have been in the forefront. The *New York Times* (9 October) reports: "Democrats, in particular, have been eying China as a line of attack. This spring, national Democrats, including the House speaker, Nancy Pelosi, began to encourage candidates to highlight the issue after reviewing internal polling that suggested voters strongly favored eliminating tax breaks for companies that do business in China."

The Democrats have been flooding the airwaves with ads attacking Republican candidates for taking secret contributions from foreign interests and, in particular, supposedly selling out American jobs to China. Running point for the Democrats are the same labor bureaucrats who have proven utterly bankrupt when it comes to defending their members against the profit-bloated U.S. bosses. In *USA Today* (30 September), AFL-CIO chief Richard Trumka railed, "We're in a trade war with China," declaring, "It's time for action." On October 15, the United Steelworkers bureaucracy hailed Obama for accepting the union's complaint against China's "predatory" trade practices—i.e., its state investment in energy-producing technology and other industries, which has helped China's economy grow by huge strides while the world's capitalist economies have been mired in recession.

Although administered by a parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy, and despite capi-

AFP

Unemployed workers line up outside job fair in El Monte, California, September 4.

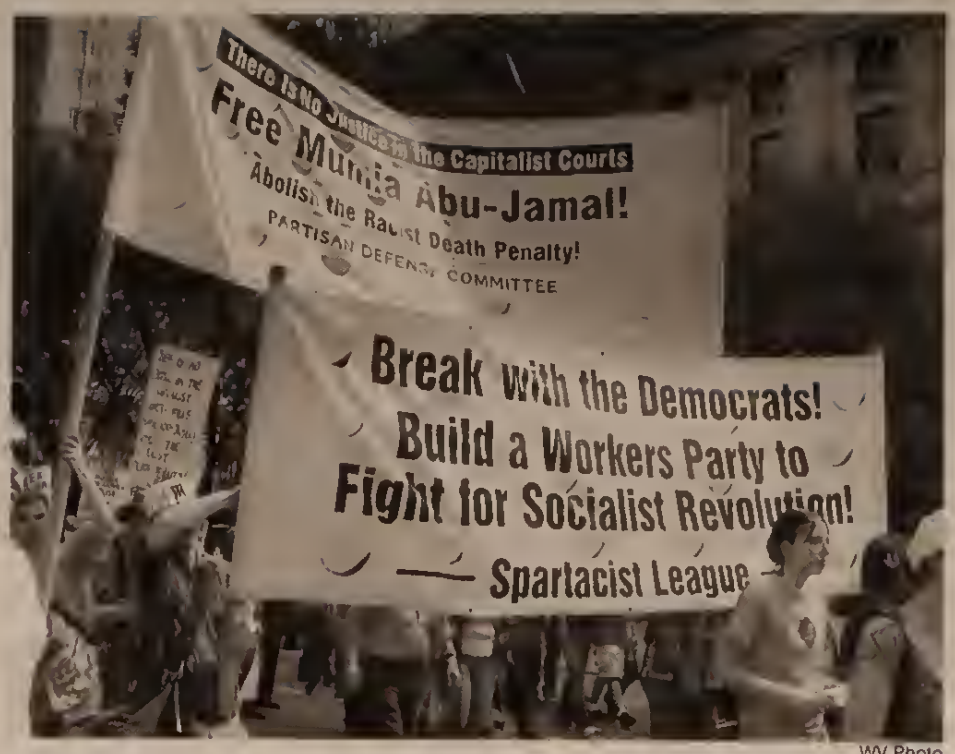
CORRECTION

In "Appeals Court Hearing on Death Sentence for Mumia Abu-Jamal" (*WV* No. 966, 8 October), we wrote, referring to a November 9 hearing to be held by the Third Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia, "The new hearing is a result of a January U.S. Supreme Court ruling that vacated Yohn's decision, which had been previously upheld by the Third Circuit." In fact, the Supreme Court decision did not vacate Judge William Yohn's 2001 decision, which overturned Mumia's death sentence while upholding his frame-up conviction. It vacated the Third Circuit's March 2008 ruling that had upheld Yohn's decision. In the upcoming hearing, the prosecution is seeking to reinstate Mumia's death sentence.

talist inroads resulting from "market reforms," China's core economy remains based on collectivized property, providing examples of what can be done when the guiding principle is not the generation of profit. As Trotskyists, we unconditionally defend the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialist attack and internal capitalist counterrevolution. Simultaneously, we fight for proletarian political revolution to sweep away the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy and place power in the hands of workers and peasants councils committed to the fight for world proletarian revolution.

October 2: Sniveling Reformism in Action

When the AFL-CIO officialdom and NAACP called for a national demonstration in Washington, D.C., to get out the vote in November, the reformist left jumped all over the rally. The October 2 demonstration was held under the slogan "One Nation Working Together" and explicitly supported by Obama. One of its backers, the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL), noted on its Web site: "The demonstration had been planned for months, but an obvious spur that motivated many participants to make such sacrifice to attend was the Aug. 28 'Tea Party' rally staged by right-wing media personality Glenn Beck on the National Mall." The reformists are quaking in fear of a Republican victory, having done their part two years ago to help the Democrats gain control of the White House as well as Congress. Their framework is to mobilize people "in the streets" in order to pressure the capitalist state to do the right thing by workers, blacks and others, through the agency of the Democrats in office.



WV Photo

Spartacists at Philadelphia demonstration for death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, April 2008.

Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee

Campaign ad by Pennsylvania Congressman Joe Sestak, part of nationwide China-bashing barrage by Democratic Party.

Since the bloom is off the Obama presidency, the reformists' current tack is to hold up the sacred image of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal of the 1930s. The Progressive Democrats of America Web site (4 October) put it baldly: "When FDR was confronted with unemployment and the Great Depression, it was the progressive movement that met with him, just as we're going to be on the streets to hold our president accountable. And at that time FDR said, make me do it. Well, we are here to remind Barack Obama to get on and do it." In the Democrats' tow, the International Socialist Organization (ISO), which endorsed the October 2 march, opined (socialistworker.org, 4 October) that Roosevelt was "forced by both pressure from below and the intractable economic crisis to take bold and risky actions—and put people to work." (For more on the ISO, see article, page 2).

Roosevelt was indeed able to finish off the Depression—by cranking up industry to prepare for World War II, an interimperialist conflict which the U.S. fought with the aim of world domination. His New Deal reforms were seized upon by the reformists of the day to tie labor's fortunes to the capitalist Democratic Party.

The nostalgia of the "progressive" movement for FDR's reforms is rife with "national unity" appeals. Indeed, the October 2 demonstration was a sea of red-white-and-blue. Adding a pink tinge to the patriotic outpouring was the self-styled "Socialist Contingent" sparked by Dan La Botz, formerly a leader of the Teamsters for a Democratic Union and currently Socialist Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Ohio. Joining this lash-up were, among others, the ISO, Socialist Action (SA), Solidarity and Socialist Alternative. From our vantage point, it appears that two unifying principles were supporting suing the unions in the bosses' courts and bashing China.

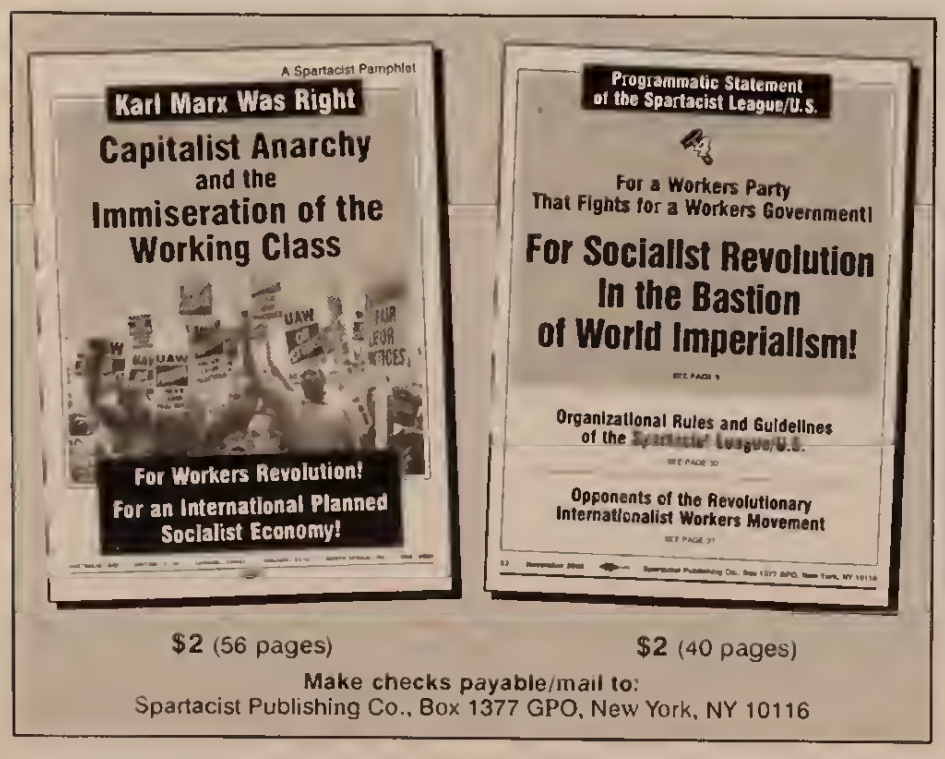
SA's Jeff Mackler, while making some noises about the "lesser-evil" electoral scam, raved: "The power that working people generate in Washington on Oct. 2 with their sheer numbers can serve to remind them they are a social force capable of great deeds" (*Socialist Action*, October 2010). In fact, the purpose of the rally was to galvanize as many *voters* as possible. By giving some left gloss to this flag-waving, Democratic Party mobilization, Mackler, the ISO et al. do their bit, as always, to herd working people across the class line.

This is also the effect of the PSL's candidacy for California governor on the ticket of the petty-bourgeois Peace and Freedom Party, as well as the Workers World Party's support for black Democrat Charles Barron, running for New York governor under the auspices of the "Freedom Party." The Freedom Party's "independent" posture is belied by the fact that it originated after Barron and others complained that the Democrats were not running enough black and Latino candidates. Campaigns such as the PSL's are nothing new. The ISO, for one, has run candidates for the small-time capitalist Green Party. As we wrote in "Parliamentary Cretinism—ISO Goes All the Way with Capitalist Greens" (*WV* No. 866, 17 March 2006):

> "The avowed socialists of the ISO are trampling on the most fundamental of Marxist principles: the political independence of the proletariat. More than 150 years ago, Karl Marx argued against calls for the German workers to support a petty-bourgeois party. In his 1850 'Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League,' Marx declared, 'The proletariat would lose its whole independent, laboriously achieved position and once more sink down to being an appendage of official bourgeois democracy. This union must, therefore, be most decisively rejected'."

Upholding the political independence of the proletariat from the bourgeoisie, a workers party might well run for and even serve in Congress or in local or state-wide legislative bodies—but only as a revolutionary opponent of the capitalist state and all its institutions. In keeping with that understanding, the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), of which the Spartacist League is the U.S. section, opposes on principle running for executive offices of the capitalist state—e.g., mayor, governor, president. As we wrote in "Down With Executive Offices of the Capitalist State! Marxist Principles and Electoral Tactics" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 61, Spring 2009):

> "The question of the state is a life-and-death question for a revolutionary workers party. It is the question of revolution. In adopting our position against running for executive offices of the bourgeois state and in critically reviewing the policies and practices inherited from our forerunners, we seek to illuminate the political gulf between the ICL and all the opportunists who falsely claim to be Marxists and to represent the historic interests of the working class. Our task is nothing other than the organizing, training and steeling of the proletarian vanguard parties, sections of a reforged Fourth International, necessary for the seizure of state power and the establishment of workers rule around the globe." ■



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WORKERS VANGUARD

Defend the Teachers Unions!

Obama's War on Public Education

AFP

California School Employees Association

Left: Barack Obama with Education Secretary Arne Duncan, administration's hatchet man against teachers unions. Right: California School Employees Association protest, San Jose, August 2009.

Under Democratic president Barack Obama's administration, "school reform" amounts to a massive assault on public education carried out through brass-knuckle attacks on teachers unions. Revamped federal funding rules turn the screws on schools described as failing, shuttering classrooms in ghettos and barrios nationwide, and give a green light for a proliferation of privately run charter schools. From Los Angeles and Chicago to New York City and Washington, D.C., Obama & Co. have made the Bush gang's policies look like child's play.

Young Spartacus

For decades, the arrogant U.S. imperialist rulers have starved education of funding. With fewer and fewer industrial jobs, America's racist capitalist rulers see little value in paying union wages to educate working-class, black and immigrant youth. The high school graduation rate in the U.S. is below 70 percent; in urban centers including Los Angeles, it falls below 50 percent. U.S. students rank 35th internationally in math, between Azerbaijan and Croatia, and 29th in science, between Latvia and Lithuania—countries many Americans cannot identify on a map. The ruling class cynically blames the teachers unions for this woeful state of affairs as it guns for the wage gains, benefits and job protections that come with a union job.

The Race to the Top program, the centerpiece of the Obama administration's "reform," has been described as No Child Left Behind part two, after the plan pushed by late Democratic Senator Ted Kennedy and George W. Bush. Obama's scheme pitted cash-strapped state school systems against each other in a competition for $4.35 billion in funding—almost 10 percent of the federal budget for education. When the states' applications were judged, the most weight was given to commitments to eliminate teacher seniority and tenure. Aiming to have "no child left untested," rewards were also based on states' plans to track student test scores. Among other things, this is a setup for victimizing individual teachers whose classes don't measure up well, particularly threatening those in the poorest school districts.

The Education Department has classified as many as 5,000 schools as failing. One reform that might actually improve them—adequate funding—is not what the administration has in mind. "We can't spend our way out of it," Obama told the *Today* show (27 September), which is rather piquant coming from a man who saw through the $700 billion bank bailout. In order for school districts to qualify for funding under Obama's School Turnaround program, they have to do one of the following to "failing" schools: close them; have a charter take them over; fire the principal and entire staff and rehire no more than half; or fire the principal, lengthen the school day and implement other onerous changes. This all spells a direct attack on the teachers unions, as Obama made clear in March when he endorsed the firing of the entire staff at Rhode Island's Central Falls High School (see "Labor: Fight Union Busting Attack on Rhode Island Teachers!" *WV* No. 954, 12 March).

The government's campaign to cripple the teachers unions is part of a broad attack on public employees. With the erosion of industry and the acquiescence of the pro-capitalist labor tops to the proliferation of non-union shops, public employees now, for the first time, make up the majority of union members in the U.S. (Many of these are cops who, as the hired guns of the capitalists, should have no place in the unions.) The two national teachers unions, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the National Education Association (NEA), represent about a quarter of all union members nationally, with 4.6 million members.

Like capitalist governments in Europe and elsewhere, American federal, state and local governments, under both Democrats and Republicans, have seized on the biggest economic crisis since the Great Depression to slash payrolls and extract massive concessions—from working hours to pensions. Some 60,000 school employees were laid off last year, and many more have already lost their jobs this school year as the bourgeoisie further cuts spending for education. Thirty-eight of the 100 largest school districts have instituted wage freezes and another ten have cut wages. The ruling class sees teachers unions as potential obstacles to slashing public education budgets. A big reason it has been able to push through its attacks on education and other services is the decades-long decline in labor struggle, overseen by a miserable trade-union "leadership" that serves as the bourgeoisie's lieutenants inside the labor movement.

The working class, black people and other minorities have a vital interest in defending public workers unions and fighting against the attacks on social services, including the bourgeoisie's attempt to turn back the clock on universal, integrated, secular public education. We oppose charter schools because they are an attack on the democratic right to public education and provide an opening for religious groups to get government funds to run schools, and contribute as well to furthering school segregation. The drive to expand charter schools underlines the link between racial oppression, union-busting and the promotion of religious obscurantism.

Like the fight for decent health care, the battle for quality education, including bilingual instruction, for the working class and the black and Latino poor requires hard struggle against the capitalist class, a tiny handful of people whose obscene wealth is gained from exploiting labor and whose rule is reinforced by racial and other forms of social oppression. The money and resources exist for massive construction of schools, hospitals and other infrastructure gutted by the profit-bloated capitalists. To seize that wealth requires breaking the power of the bourgeoisie through socialist revolution.

Education U.S.A.—Separate and Unequal

Education in capitalist America is class- and race-biased from top to bottom. From public education's earliest days in the industrial revolution of the 19th century, when class bells and the structure of the school day were used to facilitate the transition from the family farm into the factory, education has been crafted to meet the needs of the capitalist class. Ruling-class offspring are guaranteed places at expensive private schools and universities. In addition, the bourgeoisie needs a layer of educated technicians, professionals, managers and ideologues. The last serious effort to promote science education in this country was after the Soviet Union launched its Sputnik I satellite in 1957. Fear of a Soviet lead in military technology led President Eisenhower to demand a billion-dollar program to improve science education in American schools and to sign the National Defense

continued on page 6

For Free Quality Integrated Education for All!

WORKERS VANGUARD

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WikiLeaks Documents:

U.S. Torture Machine in Iraq

The whistle-blowers at WikiLeaks have struck again. On October 22, WikiLeaks published the largest leak of classified military material in history—nearly 400,000 military field reports on the Iraq war and occupation. Mostly written by soldiers on the ground, the reports detail more than 109,000 deaths, most of them civilians, in the seven years since the U.S.-led imperialist invasion and occupation of Iraq. They capture a snapshot of how the U.S. has pulverized what was once one of the more advanced countries of the Near East. They describe in nightmarish detail the torture of detainees, executions at U.S. checkpoints as well as the sectarian carnage unleashed by the occupation—atrocities started under the Bush administration and continued without respite under the "reduced" occupation force of Barack Obama.

The reports document accounts of torture that rival those at the notorious Abu Ghraib prison. Having been caught out in Abu Ghraib and other American torture centers in Iraq, U.S. occupiers opted to subcontract some of their dirty work to their Iraqi puppet army and police, who tortured their victims through suspension and hanging, beating, whipping, electric shocks, burning, sensory deprivation and rape. Recalling that one of the bogus pretexts of the 2003 Iraq invasion was the "moral imperative" to put an end

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Down With Repression Against Strikers, Youth!

French Strike Wave Against Government Attack on Pensions

Getty

Reuters

Left: Demonstration in Lyon against government austerity, October 19, part of national day of protests that drew 3.5 million. Above: Cops break blockade of striking workers at Grandpuits oil refinery, southeast of Paris, October 22.

PARIS, November 1—The fight by French workers to defend their retirement pensions against government attack has been one of the sharpest class battles this country has seen in years. Strikes by workers at oil refineries and strategic fuel terminals, which were at the core of the struggle, eventually shut down all 12 of the country's refineries before being called off last week. Strikes by railroad, subway and airport workers crippled transportation, while shortages closed gasoline stations across the country and threatened the fuel-needy industrial sector. A 33-day-long strike by fuel terminal workers in the Marseille area stranded some 80 vessels offshore in the Mediterranean. Sanitation workers struck in at least ten cities. In Marseille, 11,000 tons of uncollected trash piled in the streets.

In protests held in September and October, millions mobilized throughout the country. Yet in the face of overwhelming public opposition to the pension "reform" pushed by right-wing president Nicolas Sarkozy, parliament gave final passage last week to a law increasing the minimum retirement age by two years to 62 and the age to receive a full pension to 67.

Determined to make French capitalism competitive against its imperialist rivals, Sarkozy played hardball with the strikers. Hundreds of riot cops were mobilized to forcibly disperse picket lines blocking refineries, fuel depots and other industrial sites. Near Nantes, the entire town of Donges, which has one of the largest refineries in the country, was placed under a state of siege by an army of riot cops. Strikers at the Grandpuits refinery near Paris were ordered to return to work in the interests of "national defense" or face six-month prison terms. Since mid October, the government has arrested at least *2,500 people*.

These attacks on strikers—and on the very right to strike—coincided with systematic police violence against high school youth, particularly those from working-class trade schools with a strong minority component. Youth joined the protests in large numbers, conscious that extending the retirement age would further increase youth unemployment, which stands at 23 percent for those under 25. The last few

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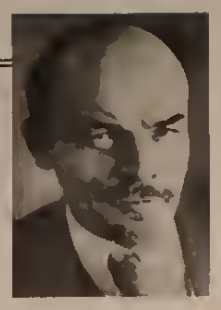
No to a New Popular Front!
For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

TROTSKY



LENIN

In Honor of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution

November 7 (October 25 by the calendar used in Russia at the time) marks the 93rd anniversary of the Russian Revolution. Led by the Bolshevik Party of V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, the workers' seizure of power in Russia gave flesh and blood reality to the Marxist understanding of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Despite the subsequent Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet workers state, culminating in its counterrevolutionary destruction in 1991-92, the October Revolution was and is the international proletariat's greatest victory; its final undoing, a world-historic defeat. The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) fought to the bitter end in defense of the Soviet Union and the bureaucratically deformed workers states of East Europe, while calling for workers political revolutions to oust the parasitic nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies that ruled these states. This is the same program we uphold today for the remaining workers states of China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba.

Having been expelled from the USSR in 1929 by Stalin, Trotsky spent the remainder of his life in exile. In November 1932, he gave a speech to a Danish social-democratic student group in Copenhagen. He outlined the political conditions and the social forces that drove the Russian Revolution, stressing the decisive role of the Bolshevik Party. Illuminating the worldwide impact of the Russian Revolution and its place in history, Trotsky underlined the necessity of sweeping away the decaying capitalist order and replacing it with a scientifically planned international socialist economy that will lay the material basis for human freedom.

The ICL fights to forge workers parties modeled on Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks to lead the struggle for new October Revolutions around the globe.

* * *

Revolution means a change of the social order. It transfers the power from the hands of a class which has exhausted itself into those of another class, which is on the rise....

Without the armed insurrection of November 7, 1917, the Soviet state would not be in existence. But the insurrection itself did not drop from Heaven. A series of historical prerequisites was necessary for the October revolution.

1. The rotting away of the old ruling classes—the nobility, the monarchy, the bureaucracy.

RGAKFD

Moscow, 1918: Red Army soldiers celebrate first anniversary of October Revolution under banner reading "Communism."

For New October Revolutions!

2. The political weakness of the bourgeoisie, which had no roots in the masses of the people.

3. The revolutionary character of the peasant question.

4. The revolutionary character of the problem of the oppressed nations.

5. The significant social weight of the proletariat.

To these organic pre-conditions we must add certain conjunctural conditions of the highest importance:

6. The Revolution of 1905 was the great school, or in Lenin's words, the "dress rehearsal" of the Revolution of 1917. The Soviets, as the irreplaceable organizational form of the proletarian united front in the revolution, were created for the first time in the year 1905.

7. The imperialist war sharpened all the contradictions, tore the backward masses out of their immobility and thereby prepared the grandiose scale of the catastrophe.

But all these conditions, which fully sufficed for the *outbreak of the Revolution*, were insufficient to assure the *victory of the proletariat* in the Revolution. For this victory one condition more was needed:

8. The Bolshevik Party....

In the year 1883 there arose among the emigres the first Marxist group. In the year 1898, at a secret meeting, the foundation of the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party was proclaimed (we all called ourselves Social-Democrats in those days). In the year 1903 occurred the split between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. In the year 1912 the Bolshevist fraction finally became an independent Party.

It learned to recognize the class mechanics of society in struggle, in the grandiose events of twelve years (1905-1917). It educated cadres equally capable of initiative and of subordination. The discipline of its revolutionary action was based on the unity of its doctrine, on the tradition of common struggles and on confidence in its tested leadership.

Thus stood the Party in the year 1917. Despised by the official "public opinion" and the paper thunder of the intelligentsia press, it adapted itself to the movement of the masses. Firmly it kept in hand the control of factories and regiments. More and more the peasant masses turned toward it. If we understand by "nation," not the privileged heads, but the majority of the people, that is, the workers and peasants, then Bolshevism became in the course of the year 1917 a truly national Russian Party.

In September 1917, Lenin, who was compelled to keep in hiding, gave the signal, "The crisis is ripe, the hour of the insurrection has approached." He was right. The ruling classes had landed in a blind alley before the problems of the war, the land and national liberation. The bourgeoisie finally lost its head. The democratic parties, the Mensheviks and social-revolutionaries, wasted the remains of the confidence of the masses in them by their support of the imperialist war, by their policy of ineffectual compromise and concession to the bourgeois and feudal property-owners. The awakened army no longer wanted to fight for the alien aims of imperialism. Disregarding democratic advice, the peasantry smoked the landowners out of their estates. The oppressed nationalities at the periphery rose up against the bureaucracy of Petrograd. In the most important workers' and soldiers' Soviets the Bolsheviki were dominant. The workers and soldiers demanded action. The ulcer was ripe. It needed a cut of the lancet.

Only under these social and political conditions was the insurrection possible. And thus it also became inevitable. But there is no playing around with the insurrection. Woe to the surgeon who is careless in the use of the lancet! Insurrection is an art. It has its laws and its rules.

The Party carried through the October insurrection with cold calculation and with flaming determination. Thanks to this, it conquered almost without victims. Through the victorious Soviets the Bolsheviki placed themselves at the head of a country which occupies one sixth of the surface of the globe....

Let us now in closing attempt to ascertain the place of the October Revolution, not only in the history of Russia but in the history of the world. During the year 1917, in a period of eight months, two historical curves intersect. The February upheaval—that belated echo of the great struggles which had been carried out in past centuries on the territories of Holland, England, France, almost all of Continental Europe—takes its place in the series of bourgeois revolutions. The October Revolution proclaims and opens the domination of the proletariat. It was world capitalism that suffered its first great defeat on the territory of Russia. The chain broke at its weakest link. But it was the

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 968 **5 November 2010**

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Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!
Free All Class-War Prisoners!

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Toronto: Fake Left Joins Witchhunt of Black Bloc

Police State Crackdown on G20 Protesters

The following article originally appeared in Spartacist Canada *No. 166 (Fall 2010), newspaper of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste, Canadian section of the International Communist League.*

SPARTACIST CANADA

During the June 25-27 protests against the G20 summit in Toronto, some 1,100 people were arrested—the largest mass arrests in Canadian history. Inside the heavily fortified summit, [Canadian prime minister Stephen] Harper, Obama and other imperialist rulers plotted how best to police the imperialist order and shore up their crumbling economies on the backs of working people. Meanwhile, out on the streets, the cops ran amok, cracking heads and terrorizing protesters. For months, the Harper government, the cops and the media set the stage for this with predictions of anarchist "violence." Nearly 20,000 cops occupied the city core in an unprecedented mobilization of state repression that cost more than $1 billion.

Backed by their political masters from Ottawa to Toronto's city hall, the cops used minor property damage and a few burned-out police cars as the signal for a massive crackdown. Across the city, from Parkdale to the East End, left-wing activists were rounded up and those who protested the police violence and mayhem were themselves arrested. Riot police charged and arrested protesters in the so-called "free speech zone" in Queen's Park [site of Ontario Legislature]. Hundreds of protesters and passersby were "kettled" in a downtown intersection, penned in by cops for hours in the driving rain.

Denouncing the manufactured furor over so-called "vandalism," the Partisan Defense Committee, the legal defense organization associated with the Trotskyist League, issued a June 28 statement, declaring:

> "From the standpoint of the working class such actions are no crime! What is a smashed bank window compared to an imperialist system that condemns millions to death by starvation, disease and war?"

The cops' barbaric treatment of those arrested perfectly mirrors the racism, chauvinist oppression and violence that are integral to capitalist society. Inside the mass detention centre on Eastern Avenue, minorities were subjected to racist abuse. Women, gays and lesbians were singled out for special humiliation, including sexual manhandling and threats of rape. Some protesters were repeatedly strip searched, denied access to toilets, water and adequate food. The disabled were brutalized and those with cop-inflicted injuries were denied medical care.

Reflecting the national oppression of the Québécois at the hands of the Canadian ruling class, protesters from Quebec —automatically deemed supporters of the anarchist Black Bloc—were singled out for arrest and vile Anglo-chauvinist abuse. Merely speaking French or having Quebec plates on your car made you a target. According to a Montreal law student, the cops who pulled him over stated: "We're pulling people over from Quebec, we're stopping people in cars and buses" (cbc.ca, 3 July). At least 50 Québécois were arrested in an early morning raid at the University of Toronto's Graduate Students Union, where they were being billeted. So many Québécois were arrested that of the 450 who came to Toronto on the buses organized by the Anti-Capitalist Convergence (CLAC), only 125 made the return trip.

In the early hours of June 26, even before the main anti-G20 demonstration, cops barged into private homes at gunpoint, arresting as many as 23 left-wing activists from the Southern Ontario Anarchist Resistance (SOAR), No One Is Illegal and the Montreal-based CLAC. Seventeen protesters now face multiple "conspiracy" charges, which could bring heavy jail time.

Gundlock/National Post

Cops rampage against anti-G20 summit protesters in Toronto, June 26.

Conspiracy charges are often wielded by the state to go after perceived opponents against whom there is no evidence. The capitalist rulers have a long history of using such frame-up prosecutions against the left and labour movement. The early trade unions in this country were outlawed as "criminal conspiracies." In the 1930s, as the anarchy of production for profit led to mass unemployment, the capitalist rulers launched a ferocious campaign of anti-communist repression, charging members of the Communist Party with "seditious conspiracy." Such charges criminalize political protest and are meant to intimidate and silence all those who would oppose the violence, poverty and exploitation that are endemic to the rule of capital. Drop all the charges against the G20 protesters now!

Reformist Bankruptcy: Public Inquiries and Cop Baiting

To quell the tide of anger over the cop crackdown and refurbish the image of the cops, various politicians and bourgeois liberals have called for a "puhlic inquiry" into the police violence, a demand eagerly embraced by the reformist left. And multiple inquiries have indeed been announced. In promoting such inquiries, these leftists propagate a dangerous myth that the capitalist state and its cops can be reformed to serve the interests of the oppressed.

The cops, along with the prisons, courts and military, make up the core of the capitalist state, an instrument of organized violence used to maintain the rule of the capitalists against the working class. When the police kill and brutalize immigrants and Natives, repress leftists, attack picket lines or student protesters, this flows directly from the fact that they serve but one master, the capitalist class. Their job is to protect the profit system that creates unemployment, poverty and oppression. No amount of parliamentary claptrap, "inquiries" or appeals to "justice" will reform the capitalist state. It must be overthrown by a class-conscious working class in a socialist revolution and replaced by a workers state. The June events in Toronto amply demonstrate the truth of thc statement by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the 1848 *Communist Manifesto* that "The executive of the modern State is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie."

From the Harper governinent to Toronto's social-democratic mayor David Miller and much of the left, a furious outcry went up against the supposed "violence" of the anarchists. Grotesquely, feminist blowhard Judy Rebick told a CP24 newsman on June 27 that there should have been *more* cop repression and preemptive arrests. "What they could have done," Rebick railed, "is arrest the Black Bloc at the beginning before they had a chance to be part of a bigger crowd and that's what they didn't do." Rad-lib media darling Naomi Klein echoed this with her call on the cops to "do your goddamn job."

The NDP's [social-democratic New Democratic Party] Jack Layton and the bureaucrats of the Canadian Labour Congress and Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) spoke as one in denouncing "violence" by the protesters. A statement by OFL president Sid Ryan hragged that the labour tops "liaised with the Toronto Police and cooperated at every turn" during the large June 26 protest which they sponsored, and added: "Shamefully, a small number of hooligans used the cloak of our peaceful and lawful demonstration to commit petty acts of vandalism in the streets of Toronto." This snivelling loyalty to bourgeois "order" is the labour tops' guarantee that they will contain workers' struggles within thc bounds of capitalist legality.

The Communist Party (CP), Socialist Action (SA), Fighthack [affiliated with Alan Woods' International Marxist Tendency] and the International Socialists (I.S.) all rushed to join the denunciations of the anarchists. The CP ranted that SOAR and the Black Bloc were "playing into the hands of state repression" and demanded that they be "publicly repudiated and condemned" (*People's Voice*, 1-31 August). Blaming the protesters for causing the cop violence, SA claimed that the "Bloc-istas also gave the cops ammunition to brutalize and jail over 900 innocents" ("Summits of Deceit and Repression," undated leaflet). I.S. leader Ritch Whyman condemned the Black Bloc who, he said, "utilize the larger rally and split marches to launch attacks on property and the police" (socialistproject.ca, 3 July). The idea that the cops needed the excuse of the Black Bloc to round up hundreds of protesters is simply fatuous. The cops have never needed an excuse for their repression!

The Fightback group, deeply buried in the NDP, was even more virulent in its attacks on the Black Bloc. A June 30 public meeting on the G20 events run by this group featured speakers who actually praised the cops! One of them, United Steelworkers leader and Ontario NDP vice president Mike Seaward, declared that "most of the day the police acted rationally—they were good." Meanwhile, a Fightback leaflet for the meeting ranted that "the Black Bloc are not part of our movement and there is no difference between them and police provocateurs."

That the police insinuate provocateurs into the workers movement and left-wing protests is a given for anyone familiar with the workings of the capitalist state. But in the mouths of these reformists, denunciations of "provocateurs" are a cover for ***refusing to defend leftists facing state repression***.

All of these misnamed "socialists" stand indicted as reformists committed to the rule of capital, their program and actions completely defined by the framework of bourgeois society. Such a policy was sharply characterized by Leon Trotsky, co-leader with V.I. Lenin of the October 1917 Revolution, as "the actual training of the masses to become imbued with the inviolability of the bourgeois state" (*The Lessons of October*, 1924). In this, their forebears are the social democrats who united with the imperialists to oppose the October Revolution; who in Germany ordered the Freikorps murders of heroic revolutionaries Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht.

Smearing the victims of police state violence is in perfect harmony with Fightback's long-held position that cops are

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Spartacist Canada

Prominent International Socialists supporters policed June 26 G20 protest for labor bureaucracy. They blocked angry marchers from summit site, telling them to "keep moving" in other direction.

Birth Control, Abortion Rights and Women's Oppression

Fifty Years After the Pill: Still a Long Way to Go

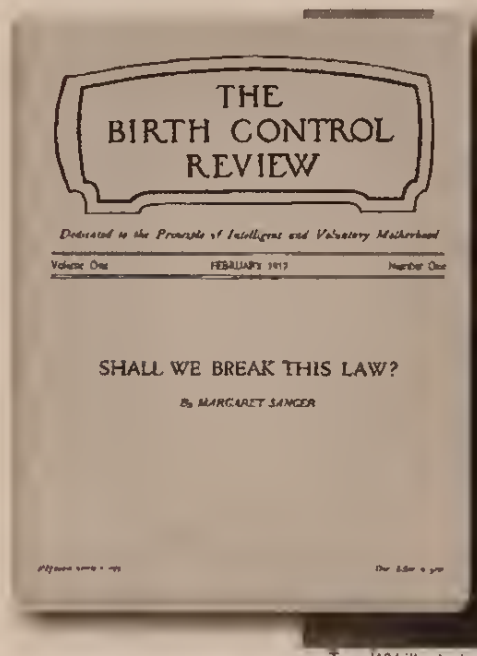
"You've come a long way, baby," crooned the old Virginia Slims commercials on TV in the late 1960s, and the bourgeois media has picked up the tune again on this, the fiftieth anniversary of the Pill (no further definition necessary—everyone knows you are talking about s-e-x). And everyone knows the Pill is all about sex. When in 1975 Loretta Lynn sang, "I'm tearin' down your brooder house 'cause now I've got the pill," the hearts of millions of women across America beat in time to the rhythm of her song, which dozens of radio stations tried to censor—until it made the hit charts.

The Pill was the first reliable contraceptive that gave women control over their own reproduction. This tremendous medical advance enabled women to separate sexual enjoyment from fear of pregnancy, freeing them from the now excessive fertility with which evolution has endowed our species. But birth control and abortion remain restricted throughout the capitalist world by the state, by the institution of the family, and by organized religion, which all serve to enforce women's oppression. As long as the capitalist order exists, the benefits of science will be limited by the exploitation and oppression of this class system. Marxists look forward to the day when science can be "applied with full understanding to all the fields of human activity," to quote the words of German socialist leader August Bebel, whose 1879 work *Woman and Socialism* was one of the first major Marxist works on the woman question.

Leon Trotsky, co-leader with V.I. Lenin of the 1917 October Revolution, underlined that birth control and abortion are among woman's "most important civil, political and cultural rights" (*The Revolution Betrayed* [1936]). We fight for women's liberation through socialist revolution. We call for *free abortion on demand* as part of *free, quality health care for all* and for *free, 24-hour childcare* to address the deep class and racial oppression of poor and minority women. The wealthy will always get their medical care, including their abortions, while myriad anti-abortion laws and restrictions on birth control target young, working-class and poor women, who can't afford quality health care, childcare and housing.

At the time of its first release by the pharmaceutical company Searle, big predictions were made about the effect that the Pill would have on society. Moral bigots wailed that it would promote female promiscuity and the decline of religion and the patriarchal family, while birth control advocates believed it would save the family, create happy marriages and end the world population explosion. The Pill was even hailed as the solution to the "Red Menace." In her book *America and the Pill: A History of Promise, Peril, and Liberation* (Basic Books, 2010), historian Elaine May speaks of how some Cold Warriors believed that the Pill "would alleviate the conditions of poverty and unrest that might lead developing nations to embrace communism, and instead promote the growth of markets for consumer goods and the embrace of capitalism."

In fact, the "sexual revolution" that is often credited to the Pill was the result, in one way or another, of the convulsive social struggles of the civil rights movement, which broke the back of Jim Crow segregation in the South, and of opposition to U.S. imperialism's war against the Vietnamese Revolution. The major social upheavals of the 1960s that broke up the reactionary Cold War consensus also led to substantial advances in access to higher education and professional jobs for women. At the same time, the civil rights movement could not eradicate the race-color caste oppression of black people, which is the bedrock of American capitalism, just as the institution of the family, the main source of women's oppression in capitalist society, is a bulwark of the bourgeois order.


THE BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW

Dedicated to the Principle of Intelligent and Voluntary Motherhood

Volume One FEBRUARY 1917 Number One

SHALL WE BREAK THIS LAW?

By MARGARET SANGER

Top: WV illustration based on Ortho/McNeil photo, above right: Bettmann

First issue (February 1917) of monthly journal published by Margaret Sanger, shown here protesting gag rule against birth control advocacy in Boston, 1929.

Abortion Rights Under Attack

While U.S. bourgeois pundits celebrate the reproductive freedom that the Pill has given women, it is striking that most do not mention the precipitous decline in women's access to abortion. The assault on women's right to abortion continues unabated in the courts and halls of government, especially on the state level. As of June, some 370 bills to restrict abortion rights had been introduced this year alone in state legislatures across the country, and many have already passed. These range from Oklahoma's cruel requirement that a doctor show the woman an ultrasound of the fetus, to Nebraska's ban on all abortions after 20 weeks based on the claim that the fetus can feel pain. Perhaps the most barbarous is Utah's new law. Passed after a desperate 17-year-old paid a man $150 to beat her in an effort to induce a miscarriage, the law now allows homicide charges against women in similar cases! Meanwhile, the lies that abortion causes depression and breast cancer continue to circulate, and some recent polls show that for the first time more Americans call themselves "pro-life" than "pro-choice."

The arsenal of legal measures on the federal as well as the state level has already made abortion virtually inaccessible to a large number of women. Thirty-eight states prohibit abortions after a specified point in pregnancy. Fully 35 states require one or both parents of women under 18 to be notified and/or consent to an abortion. Some 87 percent of U.S. counties and 31 percent of metropolitan areas have no abortion services.

In May 2009, the "pro-life" war on women claimed yet another life. Dr. George Tiller—one of only three doctors whose clinics provide late-term abortions in the United States—was assassinated while attending his church in Wichita, Kansas, by a right-wing anti-abortion bigot. Tiller, a main target of the anti-woman God squad for decades, was the eighth person murdered in this anti-abortion, "family values" onslaught since 1993. In an article titled "The New Abortion Providers," the *New York Times* (18 July) details the long decline in the number of doctors trained in performing abortions and tells the story of young doctors in groups like Medical Students for Choice fighting to make abortion part of a doctor's regular practice. Abortion is a medical procedure, now one of the safest in the world, that does not need to be carried out in isolated clinics, where doctors and their families, friends and co-workers can easily be subjected to harassment, violence and death by anti-abortion fanatics.

Ever since the passage of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, the basic democratic right of legal abortion has been under attack. The war on abortion rights has become a spearhead for social and political reaction because at its heart lies the question of legal and social equality for women. Providing women with some control over whether or not to have children, abortion is viewed as a threat to the institution of the family.

Access to contraception, too, is limited by cost and lack of basic information, while "conscience clauses" allow pharmacies to refuse to fill prescriptions for birth control and Plan B, the "morning-after" pill. To all this can be added anti-woman moralizing, which rants that a girl shouldn't want to have sex. The argument goes that while any unwed mother is a bad girl, if she can claim she got carried away, maybe the sin is not quite as great (as long as she doesn't have an abortion). But having birth control implies premeditation. Precisely! In the words of the late comedian George Carlin, "Not every ejaculation deserves a name."

Today sex education in schools is increasingly under attack, while abstinence remains the focus of government-funded programs like the State Personal Responsibility Education Program, established by Barack Obama's recent health care "reform" act. Abortion clinics are overwhelmingly outnumbered by "pregnancy crisis centers"—fake clinics set up by anti-abortion groups with the purpose of subjecting pregnant women to anti-abortion propaganda and otherwise pressuring them to carry the fetus to term. According to the *Nation*, some 4,000 of these centers have received over $60 million in federal abstinence and marriage-promotion funds. As a result of the ignorance and miseducation produced by this tangle of social reaction, almost half of pregnancies in the U.S. every year are unplanned, according to the most recent government survey.

While U.S. newspapers headline "The Pill: Making Motherhood Better for 50 Years" (*Washington Post*, 9 May), the masses of working-class, minority and poor women have missed the celebration. The Great Recession rages on; union-

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

busting is destroying what good union jobs remain; homes are in foreclosure; millions of working people cannot get jobs and their children cannot get a decent education or affordable health care. Except for the women at the very top of society, where the rich are certainly getting richer, the decades-long assault on the working class and the poor has more than canceled out the important improvements in women's legal status over the last 50 years.

In times of substantial class and social struggle, the capitalist class may be forced to cede some reforms. But as long as the capitalist order remains, the ruling class will seek to overturn these gains, as it is now doing, when such struggles are at an ebb. As revolutionary communists, we defend every gain that's been won for the exploited and oppressed, such as the gains wrested during the hard struggles of the civil rights movement. But these reforms have a fundamentally token quality to them because they leave untouched the capitalist system. The source of black oppression and anti-woman bigotry is not the particular capitalist party in power—whether Democratic or Republican—but the capitalist order that breeds oppression and bigotry as a necessary corollary to its system of exploitation.

Sex and Social Control

The capitalist class seeks to buttress the family, which, along with organized religion and the state, form a triad that props up the exploitation of labor. To free women from their deeply entrenched special oppression will take a workers revolution to rip this system of exploitation out by the roots and replace it with a workers government to begin the construction of a socialist world. Only then can we undertake the profound changes in the fabric of everyday life where the institution of the family is replaced by socialized childcare and housework, enabling women to fully participate in social and political life.

The family is not an immutable, timeless institution, but a social relation subject to historical change. In his classic 1884 work *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, Friedrich Engels traced the origin of the family and the state to the division of society into classes. The development of agriculture allowed the creation of a social surplus. In turn, that surplus gave impetus to the development of a leisured ruling class, thus moving human society away from the primitive egalitarianism of the Old Stone Age (Paleolithic). The centrality of the family began with its role in ensuring "legitimate heirs" for the patriarchal inheritance of property, which required women's sexual monogamy and social subordination. In the 10,000 years since the advent of class society, the family has taken many forms—including polygamous, extended and nuclear—reflecting different political economies and their cultures and religions. But the oppression of women is a fundamental feature of *all* class societies.

The family is a socially conservatizing force that imposes certain behavioral norms. For example, in this country the definition of "manhood" is, besides getting a girl pregnant, the ability to support a wife and children. But that is becoming ever more difficult given the lack of decent-paying union jobs. If not for wives entering the workforce, the entire bottom 60 percent of the U.S. population would have had real income losses since 1979. At the same time, the institution of the family serves the capitalist rulers by placing the burden of raising a new generation of proletarians on working men and women. Indeed, the "family values" crowd (which encompasses Democrats as well as the Republicans) wails about the so-called "crisis of the family" and insists that it is both right and proper that parents should be wholly responsible for the upbringing of their children.

Even the most cursory examination of laws regulating abortion, contraception and the like that go back thousands of years shows that they are integrally related to the maintenance of the family. Some of the first documented legal measures to strengthen the patriarchal family were enacted in ancient Rome under Augustus Caesar. These included prohibitions against adultery, incentives for widows to remarry, "sin" taxes on bachelors 30 years and older, and incentives for fathers of three or more children. The concern of the government was to have enough Roman citizens to fill the ranks of the army and maintain the city of Rome as the core of the Empire.

Modern abortion laws show how social and legal institutions have changed to reflect the interests of the capitalist class. In 1803 the British Ellenborough Act marked the advent of abortion as a statutory crime in the English-speaking world. The interest of the ruling class in this law and others following it was to protect the male's right to heirs, punish (especially single) women for illicit sex and encourage population growth for the newly forged capitalist nation-state, its army and labor pool.

Alongside legal prohibition stands religion, the strongest ideological force against birth control and abortion, especially the Roman Catholic church. The claims by the Pope and other clergy about the "souls" of unborn children are revealed as so much superstition by the science of human development. Yet thanks to the reactionary influence of religion, tens of thousands of women die each year from illegal abortions—lives that would have been saved with access to birth control and abortion. A brief look at Catholic doctrine shows that the church has changed its mind several times about when the nonexistent "soul" enters into the conceptus. For most of the existence of the church, this was considered to be the time of "quickening," at about the fourth month, when the pregnant woman can feel the movement of the fetus. John XXI, who became pope in 1276, was the author of a book called *Treasury of Medicines for the Poor*, which is the greatest single source of information about the practical means of birth control and abortion that was known in the Middle Ages. It was not until 1869 that Pope Pius IX declared that abortion "from conception" was a sin. This was a political calculation carried out in exchange for recognition of "papal infallibility" by French Emperor Napoleon III, who was seeking to stem France's decades-long decline in the birth rate.

The woman-hating strictures against birth control and abortion, the poisonous bigotry against homosexuals, the witch-hunting of "deviant" sex (who defines that?), the relentless pressure on youth to somehow refrain from giving in to their raging hormones—all these are corollaries of the institution of the family and the social control that it gives the ruling class. As communists we oppose attempts to fit human sexuality into legislated or decreed so-called "norms." Government out of the bedroom! The guiding principle for sexual relations between people should be that of effective consent—that is, nothing more than mutual agreement and understanding as opposed to coercion. All consensual relations are purely the concern of the individuals involved, and the state has no business interfering in human sexual activity.

Hutmacher/Wichita Eagle

Dr. George Tiller
1941-2009

Der Spiegel

German socialist leader August Bebel wrote in his 1879 work *Woman and Socialism*, "There can be no liberation of mankind without social independence and equality of the sexes."

Some History of Birth Control

In *Contraception and Abortion from the Ancient World to the Renaissance* (Harvard University Press, 1994), John M. Riddle explores the ways that pre-industrial people might have tried to enjoy sex without the consequence of procreation. Nobody knows if the methods he documents had much effect on the birth rates, but they certainly show intent. One city in Northern Africa, Cyrene, is believed to have made its name and its fortune from a wild giant fennel that grew nearby, which people believed to have abortifacient effects. Its use became so widespread that it was harvested to extinction.

Peter Fryer, in his witty and erudite book *The Birth Controllers*, documents that ancient Egyptians used crocodile-dung pessaries (vaginal suppositories) and other dubious methods to control fertility. The Christian Bible's story of Onan is only the most well known of a long-practiced method (withdrawal), a story used for centuries to put the terror of hell into countless adolescents for masturbation. Some historians believe that the tens of thousands of women who were executed as witches in early modern Europe may have been abortionists and birth control practitioners. In 20th-century America, before the Pill, housewives often resorted to the dangerous practice of douching with Lysol.

In the 1830s, a Massachusetts doctor named Charles Knowlton was the first person in the history of birth control to be sent to prison for advocating it. The United States also has the dubious honor of passing the first nationwide laws prohibiting the dissemination of birth-control methods. In 1873 Congress passed the Comstock Act, named for its sponsor, Postmaster General Anthony Comstock. It outlawed the circulation of contraceptive information and devices through the U.S. postal service as "pornography." In 1915 Comstock boasted that he had convicted enough people of "sexual misconduct" to fill a 60-car passenger train.

One of Comstock's prominent targets in later years was Margaret Sanger. Sanger, who would go on to found Planned Parenthood, began her political life as a member of the Socialist Party, working on the party's women's committee. She was working as a nurse, visiting immigrants in New York's Lower East Side, where she saw firsthand the suffering of women whose health had been ruined by too many pregnancies, who were struggling to feed children they could not afford to support, who all too often ended up butchered by some back-alley abortionist. Soon she began writing about sex education and health for the party's women's page under the heading, "What Every Girl Should Know." In early 1913 Comstock banned the column, and the paper ran in its place a box titled "What Every Girl Should Know—Nothing; by order of the U.S. Post Office."

Sanger soon left the Socialist Party to focus single-mindedly on fighting for birth control, a term that she herself invented. A courageous woman, Sanger set up the first birth control clinic in the country and endured arrests and imprisonment as she sought to overturn the Comstock Law and to educate women and doctors in birth control methods. She traveled to Europe to research the latest techniques and wrote a sex manual in 1926 where she describes the act of sex in ecstatic, uplifting terms. Seeking to promote the cause of birth control among the wealthy and influential, she steered her movement away from the socialist movement. Sanger, a bourgeois feminist, was willing to make any political compromise she saw as necessary to win advocates to her side and thus embraced some ugly arguments popular among bourgeois reformers of the time, such as endorsing eugenics, including the call to bar immigration for the "feebleminded." While the eugenics movement, which stigmatized the poor for their own oppression, was at the time not yet associated with the genocidal movement that would emerge in Nazi Germany, it was widely opposed by socialists. American socialist and birth control pioneer Antoinette Konikow denounced the presence of eugenicists at a 1921 New York City conference on birth control, declaring that the working-class mothers she represented "are often considered to be not fit" by such forces.

The "Population Bomb"

Behind the scenes (or not), people have always struggled to control fertility for their own private reasons. But there is

continued on page 6

WV Photo

Spartacists join in defense of abortion clinic against Operation Rescue terrorists, San Mateo, California, July 1993.

The Pill...

(continued from page 5)

also a longstanding chain of argument in favor of population control on the part of bourgeois ideologues. The most notorious of these was made by Church of England parson Thomas Malthus, whose 1798 *Essay on the Principle of Population* predicted unrelenting misery on account of population growth that would, he claimed, inevitably outstrip available resources. Writing at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in Britain, Malthus proposed two solutions: leave the poor to die of their misery (he opposed poor relief) and postpone the age of marriage so as to reduce the number of children per couple (that is, "abstinence" as birth control).

Malthusianism was, as Friedrich Engels characterized it in *The Condition of the Working-Class in England*, "the most open declaration of war of the bourgeoisie upon the proletariat." Lenin, too, denounced Malthusianism in a short 1913 article, "The Working Class and Neomalthusianism." At the same time, he noted, "It goes without saying that this does not by any means prevent us from demanding the unconditional annulment of all laws against abortions or against the distribution of medical literature on contraceptive measures, etc." Lenin called for "freedom for medical propaganda and the protection of the elementary democratic rights of citizens, men and women."

The corollary of Malthusianism, eugenics, with its calls for compulsory sterilization and forced abortions, has its contemporary advocates, including Obama's "science czar," John Holdren. In 1977, Holdren co-authored *Ecoscience: Population, Resources, Environment* with the (now largely discredited) population "experts" Paul and Anne Ehrlich. Dripping with contempt, Holdren et al. wrote: "If some individuals contribute to general social deterioration by overproducing children...they can be required by law to exercise reproductive responsibility." Such "reproductive responsibility" laws could include "compulsory abortion," "adding a sterilant to drinking water or staple foods," "sterilizing women after their second or third child" and other "involuntary fertility control" methods that would be implemented by a "Planetary Regime," which "might be given responsibility for determining the optimum population for the world." The ravings of Holdren and the Ehrlichs are worthy of the genocidal Nazi eugenics movement.

Marxists are of course not indifferent to the problem of rapid population growth. But our starting point is the fight for socialist revolution to open the widest vista of human freedom. As we wrote in part two of "Capitalism and Global Warming" (*WV* No. 966, 8 October):

> "Only a society that can raise the standard of living worldwide can provide the conditions for a natural decline in reproductive rates....
> "Under communism, human beings will have far greater mastery over their natural and social environments. Both the division between town and country and economic dependence on the family will be overcome. The time when people were compelled to have more children in order to ensure enough manpower to work the land or to care for the elderly will have long passed."

Raleigh News and Observer

Civil rights activists jailed in Wake County, North Carolina, 1963. Civil rights movement ended Jim Crow segregation in South, inspired further struggles, including for women's rights.

Genesis of the Pill

Margaret Sanger first had the idea of a "magic pill" to prevent conception in 1912, but the scientific knowledge to create it did not exist. By the end of World War II, decades of research into human reproductive biology had revealed the crucial role of hormones in conception and pregnancy. In 1953 Sanger, accompanied by International Harvester heiress Katherine McCormick, paid a visit to the Worcester Foundation for Experimental Biology, where Gregory Pincus, who in the 1930s engineered the first in vitro fertilization (a rabbit embryo), conducted his privately funded research. Pincus's early work had been cited as a great scientific achievement, but the storm of media condemnation over "babies in test tubes" led to him being denied tenure by Harvard University and all but driven from mainstream research as a "mad scientist." Another maverick scientist, chemist Russell Marker, had developed a technique, later refined by Carl Djerassi, to extract massive, cheap amounts of a synthetic progestin from a species of enormous yam that grew only in Mexico. The research to create an oral contraceptive was funded almost entirely out of McCormick's private fortune; the pharmaceutical companies would not touch research into contraception at that time.

The post-World War II years were hard for American women. The outbreak of the Cold War, the purge of communists and other militants from the unions and the rise of McCarthyism also included a wholesale campaign to put women back into the kitchen and nursery. Many women had escaped from such drudgery during World War II, when their labor was necessary for the war economy. As the government investigated "subversives," there was an unprecedented state intrusion into family life and the deadening of every aspect of social and intellectual life. A "normal" family and a vigilant mother were supposed to be the front line of defense against treason, while anti-Communists linked "deviant" family or sexual behavior to sedition. Most women were married by age 19; the birth rate became the highest in U.S. history.

At the same time, the groundbreaking reports by Alfred C. Kinsey documented what Americans really did behind the bedroom door (and in some other places, too). And women wanted better contraception. The Pill was first marketed in 1957 as a treatment for menstrual disorders. When word circulated that it suppressed ovulation and prevented pregnancy, doctors across the country were besieged by hundreds of thousands of women asking for prescriptions to treat their suddenly discovered menstrual problems.

The leap to respectability and mainstream medicine for the Pill came through Harvard gynecologist John Rock, a fertility specialist, who had the medical practice and experience in working with women patients that enabled the first clinical trials to be conducted. A devout Roman Catholic, Rock later wrote a book, *The Time Has Come: A Catholic Doctor's Proposals to End the Battle Over Birth Control*, trying to garner public support in a fruitless campaign to make the Catholic church change its denunciation of birth control as a sin.

In its first incarnation, the Pill had doses of progesterone and estrogen far higher than it does today, leading to serious side effects in some users. These dangers were seized upon by anti-woman bigots, including in the Senate, which in 1970 held a series of hearings to "investigate" the matter. Over the years the Pill has been massively tested in many combinations. While risks remain regarding breast cancer and stroke for some, the Pill in fact helps to protect women from ovarian and uterine cancer. Because it reduces or eliminates the menstrual flow, it also reduces the risk of anemia, a serious problem in poor countries. The experience of millions of women, researchers and doctors working to improve the safety of the Pill has provided the basis for the clinical trials and testing now routinely used by the Food and Drug Administration.

From Carter to Reagan: Resurgence of the Religious Right

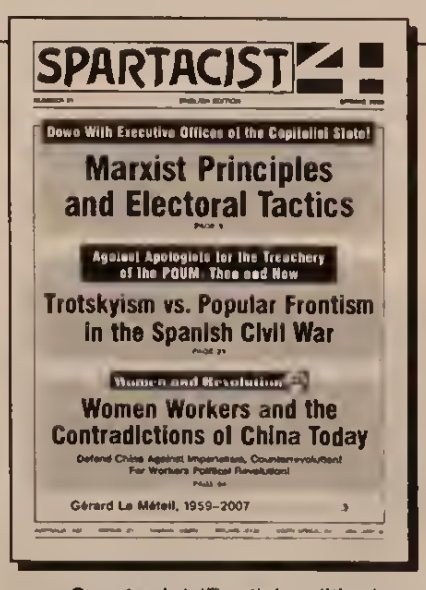
By 1960 the Pill was available by prescription as a contraceptive, but laws against contraception remained on the books in many states. Until 1965, it was illegal for married people in Connecticut to use birth control. Until 1972, it was illegal for single people to use birth control in Massachusetts and many other states as well. Bill Baird, a heroic fighter for women's right to abortion and contraception, spent three months in jail in Massachusetts for giving a package of contraceptive foam and a condom to a Boston University student as a challenge to the law. His case later went to the Supreme Court and helped lay the basis for the right to privacy—the main legal argument behind *Roe v. Wade*, which established legal abortion in the United States in 1973.

The legalization of abortion was itself a product of the explosive struggles of the 1960s. For the American bourgeoisie, the all-sided social turmoil and defiance of authority of that period were deeply disturbing. U.S. imperialism was suffering a humiliating defeat at the hands of Vietnam's heroic workers and peasants. In the late 1970s, a major bourgeois ideological assault was launched to overcome the "Vietnam syndrome"—popular hostility to direct U.S. military intervention abroad—and to instill an unquestioning acceptance of "free enterprise," God and the family among the population, which included the desirability of dying for one's country. Coming to office in 1977, the Democratic Carter administration brought "born again" religious fundamentalism front and center into the White House as it kicked off a renewal of U.S. imperialism's Cold War drive to destroy the Soviet degenerated workers state, garbed in the call for "human rights."

WV Photo

Bill Baird, champion of abortion rights for poor and black women, with photo of his Hempstead, New York, clinic, firebombed by anti-abortion terrorist in 1979.

This was the backdrop for the decades-long anti-sex witchhunt against abortion rights, pornography, gay rights and teen sex as well as for the vicious persecution of AIDS patients and day-care workers, who were targeted and jailed as "child molesters" amid hysterical allegations of "satanic ritual abuse." Beginning in the 1980s, scientific research into new contraceptive methods virtually screeched to a halt as Reagan slashed funding for family planning internationally, including for abortion and birth control, leaving many Third World women with not much to turn to. While Obama has reversed this particular policy, he explicitly disavowed



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defending the rights of women as well as immigrants in his health care proposal, proclaiming that "the reforms I'm proposing would not apply to those who are here illegally" and that "no federal dollars will be used to fund abortion, and federal conscience laws will remain in place." Ohama pledged to uphold the Hyde Amendment, which outlaws Medicaid funding for abortions.

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Birth control methods like the Pill, medical knowledge, understanding of women's health—these things have indeed taken giant leaps forward in the last 50 years. But exploitation, poverty and religious and cultural strictures deprive most women on the planet of these benefits. For them, daily life is little more than that of a beast of burden. Across vast regions of the globe, in the backward neocolonial capitalist countries oppressed by imperialism, women are swathed in the veil, sold into marriage against their will, or subjected to barbaric punishments like death sentences for "adultery" in Saudi Arabia, Iran and elsewhere. Poverty and backwardness, buttressed by imperialist domination, mean that much of the basic infrastructure necessary to bring basic medical care, contraception and abortion to Third World women is simply not there. Some researchers estimate that in Latin America and the Caribbean the primary cause of death for women between the ages of 15 and 39 is complications from illegal abortions.

WV Photo

Spartacist contingent at protest against bigots' blockade of abortion clinics, New York, 1988.

Feminism, a worldview counterposed to Marxism, is not capable of generating a program for the liberation of women. Feminism analyzes society as gender-based rather than class-based. It views anti-woman ideology as just bad thinking and puts forward that what is needed is to spread correct ideas and then maybe people will catch on and stop being bigots. Feminism is an anti-egalitarian ideology of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois women who support the capitalist system and seek their own power and privilege within it. Indeed, for women like Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama, the good life will only continue to get better. But for working-class, poor and minority women, jobs disappear, wages plummet and life only continues to get harder. The fundamental source of women's oppression is not bad laws or male chauvinist attitudes—these are but reflections of the subordination of women in the institution of the family and the capitalist system that requires it.

The liberation of women can be realized only with the victory of proletarian revolution, which will smash all forms of social oppression, lay the material basis to free women from age-old family servitude and reorganize society in the interest of all. The family cannot simply be abolished; rather, its social functions like housework, child rearing, preparation of food, etc., must be replaced by social institutions. This perspective requires a tremendous leap in social development, which can be achieved only through sweeping away capitalist rule on a global basis and replacing it with a rational, democratically planned economy. The International Communist League fights to forge Leninist-Trotskyist parties throughout the world to lead the struggle for working-class power. Inscribed on the banners of these parties will be the struggle for women's liberation, which is an integral part of the emancipating goals of communism. As we wrote in "In Defense of Science and Technology" (*WV* No. 843, 4 March 2005):

> "Communism will elevate the standard of life for everyone to the highest possible level. By eliminating scarcity, poverty and want, communism will also eliminate the greatest driving force for the prevalence of religion and superstition—and the attendant backwardness, which defines the role of women as the producers of the next generation of working masses to be exploited."

For women's liberation through socialist revolution!■

Toronto...

(continued from page 3)

"workers in uniform." For these pseudo-Marxists, the Black Bloc are not part of their "movement," but the cops are! Speaking during the discussion period at Fightback's public meeting, a TL comrade declared:

> "What we saw in the streets this past weekend proves that the capitalist state—the cops, the courts and the army—is the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie....
> "Fightback's attack on the Black Bloc protesters and practitioners is their calling card to respectability.... And what of their notorious assertion that cops are 'workers in uniform'? Go tell that to the people in the street! Go tell that to your friend who got kicked in the face!
> "Now, we of the Trotskyist League have a different idea. We understand, we have a program for workers revolution against capitalism. We have a statement of defense here with us tonight that calls to defend *all* the protesters."

A Long and Dirty History of State Repression

From the mass internment of Japanese Canadians during World War II to more than a century of cop provocations and frame-ups against communists and trade unionists, the Canadian capitalist class has never hesitated to wield the full force of state power against its targets. For sheer numbers arrested, the police-state roundups in Toronto exceeded even the mass roundups in Quebec in October 1970. Then, Liberal prime minister Trudeau invoked the War Measures Act after the kidnapping of British diplomat James Cross and Quebec labour minister Pierre Laporte by the left-nationalist Front de Libération du Québec (FLQ). Armoured cars rolled into Montreal as fully armed troopers in battle dress guarded public buildings. Over 450 labour leaders, Quebec nationalists and leftists were rounded up and held incommunicado without charges, as all civil liberties were suspended.

We Trotskyists sharply disagreed with the political program and tactics of the FLQ, but their targets in October 1970 were symbols of imperialist oppression and capitalist rule. We demanded that those imprisoned for the Cross/Laporte kidnappings and the later killing of Laporte be freed. Just as the reformist left today proves its loyalty to the bourgeois state by denouncing the Black Bloc, so ostensible "radicals" dropped defense of the FLQ like a hot potato as they swam with the rightward political tide of the late 1970s.

The repression of October 1970 was a warning to the Québécois that any threat of separation would be met with the full military force of the Canadian state. Today the oppressed nation of Quebec remains forcibly subjugated in a unitary Canadian state dominated by Anglo chauvinism. We call for Quebec independence in order to remove the roadblock of national antagonisms that divide the workers of English Canada and Quebec, poisoning prospects for united class struggle against capitalism. First and foremost, we fight against the Maple Leaf chauvinism that dominates in the English Canadian working class. At the same time, calling for independence helps combat nationalism in Quebec by giving Marxists a hearing to win Québécois workers away from their nationalist misleaders.

Archives La Presse

October 1970: As part of suppression of Québécois independence movement, Liberal prime minister Trudeau ordered army to occupy Montreal.

Consistent with their social-democratic pro-NDP politics, reformist groups like the CP and Fightback oppose Quebec independence (see, for example, "'Fightback' and the Quebec National Question," *SC* No. 162, Fall 2009 [reprinted in *WV* No. 943 (25 September 2009)]). Craven loyalty to the capitalist state is the iron logic connecting their defense of "Canadian unity" to their cop-baiting refusal to extend any solidarity to the Black Bloc anarchists.

The present witchhunt of the Black Bloc by the leftist lackeys of the capitalist state conforms to a pattern that goes back to at least the Genoa anti-G8 protests in 2001, when the Italian police killed leftist protester Carlo Giuliani. In Genoa and many times since, the imperialist rulers have been assisted in their dirty work by the reformist "left," which has joined the chorus apologizing for brutal state repression of the anarchists.

The International Communist League is forthright in our defense of the Black Bloc anarchists, but sharply critical of their politics. Anarchists hate the dictatorship of the proletariat—past, present and future. Their visceral anti-communism leads them to reject the lessons of the 1917 Russian Revolution, the world's first and only successful workers revolution. We Trotskyists unconditionally militarily defended the Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state, against capitalist counterrevolution and fought for proletarian political revolution against the ruling Stalinist bureaucratic caste. In contrast, the political current of anarchism backed the counterrevolutions of the early 1990s in the Soviet Union and East Europe. Capitalist restoration has been a colossal defeat for the working classes of these countries and internationally, and has emboldened the imperialists in their attacks on workers and the oppressed.

At bottom, anarchism is a form of radical democratic idealism which appeals to the alleged innate goodness of even the most rapacious imperialists to serve humanity. The anarchist perspective of "propaganda of the deed" by small groups of individuals is counterposed to the Marxist fight to mobilize the social power of a class-conscious proletariat to sweep away the capitalist order.

Historically, anarchism has proven to be a class-collaborationist obstacle to the liberation of the oppressed. Uniting with the counterrevolutionary White armies, some anarchists hailed and even participated in the Kronstadt uprising against the Russian Revolution, and Kronstadt remains an anti-communist touchstone for anarchists today. During the Spanish Civil War [1936-1939], anarchists became ministers in the popular-front government which disarmed and repressed the armed workers' struggle against capitalism, opening the road to decades of Franco's dictatorship. (For more, see *Marxism vs. Anarchism*, Spartacist Pamphlet, 2001.)

Successful struggle against capitalist rule and the system of imperialist subjugation must mobilize the social power of the working class on an internationalist program. Rejecting this Marxist perspective, the reformist left ties working people to their capitalist exploiters centrally through support to the NDP. The Trotskyist League fights to build a revolutionary workers party through political struggle against the NDP social democrats and their left tails. Taking up the cause of all the oppressed, such a party would give conscious leadership to the struggles of the workers not only to improve their present conditions but to do away with the entire system of capitalist wage slavery.

"Unity" with the oppressors, or with their social-democratic political agents, is the road to defeat. The only way to smash the all-sided assault on social programs, to assure free quality medical care, childcare and jobs and decent living standards for all, to end the neocolonial pillage of the Third World, is by ripping the productive forces from the hands of the capitalist class through socialist revolution and putting them in the hands of those whose labour makes society run.■

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France...

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years have seen countless protests by high school youth, including against the slashing of jobs in education. Some 50,000 teachers' jobs have been cut since 2007, with the only new spending for education going to "security," police patrols and private security guards. We demand: *Drop all charges against the strikers and high school students! Free the protesters now!*

Across Europe, the capitalist rulers are determined to make workers pay for the world economic crisis by gutting pensions, slashing the wages of public sector workers and taking an ax to what remains of "welfare state" social programs. This has provoked a series of one-day general strikes this year—half a dozen in Greece alone—with another called for later this month in Portugal. However, the workers' combativity runs up against the political program of the labor bureaucracies, which seek only to soften the "excesses" of capitalist austerity.

In France, the union movement is broken up into various federations under the influence of one or more reformist parties. For these reformists, the workers struggle against the attack on pensions should serve to "weaken" Sarkozy and lay the basis for the election of a "left" government in 2012, when presidential and parliamentary elections are scheduled. This was expressed by the spokesman of the New Anti-Capitalist Party (NPA), Olivier Besancenot, who declared in August that "much of the outcome of 2012 is playing out over the fight on pensions. It's now that we must weaken the government and the right."

The workers' militancy has been undercut by the servility of the trade-union leaders. Committed to defending the interests of French capitalism, these bureaucrats accept the necessity of "reforming" the public pension system in order to cut costs—they simply demanded a seat at the negotiating table. For months, the trade-union tops have insisted that they would accept an increase in the number of years of work needed to qualify for a full pension (the position of the CFDT union federation) or an increase in the pension taxes that are deducted from workers' wages (the position of the CGT federation). An aide for CFDT head François Chérèque told the Paris daily *Libération*: "Secretly, several leaders of the confederation wouldn't look unfavorably on a petering-out of the movement."

From the outset of the fight over pensions, the *intersyndicale*—a coalition of bureaucrats representing the various trade-union federations that has been supported by the left-wing organizations including the NPA and Lutte Ouvrière (LO)—centered the mobilization around a series of single "days of action." These events were largely staggered according to the rhythm of the parliamentary debate on the pension "reform" bill—as the National Assembly debated the bill, as the Senate voted, etc.—with the aim of wringing some concessions on the wording of the law.

Getty

AP

Above: High school students in Montpellier march against pension "reform" scheme, October 14. Below: Riot cops brutalize youth during protest in Lyon, October 19.

After this bitterly fought wave of strikes, many returned to work angrily cursing Sarkozy and pledging that he will be out of a job when the next presidential election rolls around. But the question is: in what direction will this anger be focused? Will it be channeled into supporting a new popular-front government in which the reformist workers parties manage the affairs of the bourgeois state in alliance with the parties of the capitalist class enemy? Will the bourgeoisie and union bureaucrats channel the workers' anger into anti-immigrant racism and national chauvinism? Or will the proletariat mobilize independently in defense of its class interests? At bottom, what is posed is the question of leadership. This underlines the need to forge a revolutionary workers party grounded in the Marxist understanding that the capitalist system must be overthrown through socialist revolution.

Particularly since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the reformist workers' leaders and the "far left" have imbibed the capitalists' "death of communism" crusade that falsely portrays communism as, at best, a "failed experiment." In our interventions in the recent strike movement, as in all our work, the Ligue Trotskyste de France, section of the International Communist League, has sought to reassert the revolutionary program of Bolshevism and the liberating ideals of communism.

The capitalist rulers have time and again demonstrated that they are enemies of human progress. Against the reformists who uphold the inviolability of the capitalist order, our aim is the building of a revolutionary multiethnic workers party to lead the struggle for socialist revolution. As Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky underlined in the 1938 Transitional Program, written amid the Great Depression, "If capitalism is incapable of satisfying the demands inevitably arising from the calamities generated by itself, then let it perish."

The Popular Front: A Deadly Illusion for Workers

The capitalist government, whether administered by parties of the left or right, serves the interests of the bourgeoisie at the expense of the workers and oppressed. To see how a left government would seek to dismantle the gains of the working class, one need only look beyond the Pyrenees to Spain, where the government of José Luis Zapatero's PSOE (Socialist Workers Party) is also seeking to impose austerity measures, including an increased retirement age. The PSOE's new labor law could be characterized as the CPE—but for everyone, not just youth. (The CPE was a 2006 French law, withdrawn after protests, that stipulated that new workers under 26 years of age be subject to a two-year probationary period, during which they could be fired without cause.) When workers staged a one-day general strike in September against the new labor law, Zapatero sent cops to smash the picket lines (they went so far as to use firearms against picketing workers at the CASA aircraft plant near Madrid).

Yet the Spanish union tops preach to workers that the PSOE in power represents "their" government. When Zapatero announced his labor law in June, Spain's union officials called for a one-day general strike to be held...three months later, which amounted to seeking the government's permission for the strike. The government responded to the September 29 general strike by appointing a representative of the UGT union federation, Valeriano Gómez, as the new labor minister in charge of pension "reform"!

In France, left bourgeois governments take the form of "popular fronts"—i.e., coalitions between the reformist working-class parties and outright representatives of the bourgeoisie. Revolutionaries are unconditionally opposed to these alliances, which chain the workers to the capitalist class enemy through the open class collaboration of their leaders. Historically, the popular front has served to short-circuit workers struggles, including by heading off the prospect of workers revolution, and set the workers up for often bloody defeat. In the French general strike of June 1936, the popular front—a coalition of the social democrats, the Stalinist Communist Party (PCF) and the bourgeois Radical Party—stifled a pre-revolutionary situation by channeling the upsurge onto the parliamentary plane, ultimately leading to the 1940 granting of full powers to the pro-Nazi Marshal Pétain.

The destruction of the Soviet Union has led to a profound, though uneven, regression in political consciousness internationally, with even the more advanced workers no longer identifying their struggles with the ultimate goal of socialism. Today, though the West European bourgeoisies have no immediate fear of Red Revolution, popular-front governments have nonetheless often proven themselves more effective than right-wing regimes in pushing through anti-working-class measures. It was a 1991 "white paper" published by the popular-front government of François Mitterrand/Michel Rocard that two years later served as the basis for an increase—from 37 and a half years to 40 years—in the number of years of work needed to qualify for a full pension in the private sector. In December 1995, a wave of militant strikes forced the right-wing government to back down on plans to pare back public sector pensions. But the misleaders of the working class betrayed the workers' militancy and self-sacrifice. The result was new elections that in 1997 brought into power a popular-front government under Socialist prime minister Lionel Jospin, which in-

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Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
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Wednesday, Nov. 10, 7 p.m.
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CCNY, Room NAC 1-209
138th St. and Amsterdam Ave.
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cluded PCF ministers in the government. It was under Jospin that the "Charpin Report"—which, among other things, effectively called to raise the retirement age to 65—was published, providing the framework for today's attacks on pensions.

The Fight for a Revolutionary Leadership of the Proletariat

In the face of Sarkozy's determined attack on pensions, many militant workers clearly understood that isolated "days of action" were not sufficient. Small locally based and generally brief initiatives mushroomed, including by rail workers, like an anarchic ferment lacking a plan. However, unlike December 1995, when rail and transit workers were in the vanguard of the struggle that effectively spelled the end of the right-wing government of Jacques Chirac/Alain Juppé by shutting down public transportation for over three weeks, the situation today is far more difficult for railroad workers. In line with the 2007 law on "social dialogue," the union bureaucrats have negotiated with the bosses the maintenance of a minimum level of rail service during strikes.

The union bureaucrats accept the framework of capitalism and only dare to demand what they consider to be compatible with the maintenance and prosperity of their own national ruling class, from whom they hope to gain a few crumbs. Thus by its nature, trade-union opportunism is narrowly national. And the bureaucrats themselves contribute to the spreading of chauvinist poison within the working class.

This directly undercuts the struggles of the working class, such as the recent strikes by refinery workers who, while in the forefront of the struggle to defend pensions, were also combating threats to their own jobs. From the capitalists' viewpoint, with fuel exports to the U.S. having collapsed due to the recession, there are a dozen too many refineries in Europe. French courts recently authorized the shutting down of the Dunkirk refinery, and Petroplus has announced the closure of the Reichstett refinery, near the eastern city of Strasbourg.

It was necessary for French refinery workers to appeal to their class brothers in Germany, the Netherlands, Italy and elsewhere to stop delivery of refined products to France intended to break the strike. According to *Le Monde* online (26 October), Belgian trade unionists picketed a Total-owned fuel depot at Feluy, Belgium in order to stop deliveries destined for France. But the possibility of internationalist class struggle is undercut by the nationalist perspective of the trade-union bureaucrats, whose view is: if there must be plant closures and job losses in Europe, let them be in other countries (in opposition to this, see the joint statement by the ICL's British, French and German sections, "For United International Class Struggle Against Airbus Bosses!" *WV* No. 889, 30 March 2007).

The situation cries out for a new, revolutionary leadership of the proletariat. Forging such a leadership requires a political struggle against the workers' present leadership, and in particular against those like the NPA and LO, which work within the unions to provide a left cover for the bureaucracy.

A revolutionary leadership would fight for a series of transitional demands that start from the current consciousness of wide layers of the working class, addressing their daily struggles against the capitalists, and lead to the necessity of proletarian revolution. It is essential to fight to eliminate the myriad differences in contractual status among workers—temporary employees, trainees, those with fixed contracts—as well as opening up full-time jobs for all those, especially women, who can now only find part-time work. That means fighting for free, quality childcare, open 24 hours a day. Faced with mass unemployment, which has disproportionately hit older workers and youth, it is necessary to share the work among all available workers, with no loss in pay.

There must be a struggle against racist discrimination in hiring and for an end to all work restrictions imposed on workers from East Europe (which notably target Roma from Romania). More broadly, this means a fight for *full citizenship rights for all those who are in this country*, whether they are documented or not, employed or not, wear the veil or not. The government-led racist "war on terror" targets those of Muslim origin in the first place and ultimately the entire working class. On September 14, the French parliament passed a law forbidding women, including French citizens, from wearing the face-covering Muslim *niqab* or *burqa* in public. In the name of defending the "equality" of women, the government is stigmatizing Muslim minorities as the "enemy within." *Down with the racist low on the burqo!*

It is also necessary to put a stop to the attacks on the education and health systems as well as other social programs, which hit working-class and minority neighborhoods hardest. This requires a program of major public works to build or rebuild housing, transport infrastructure, schools and high schools, hospitals and health centers that the capitalists are in the process of shutting down. The goal of the capitalist production system is to pocket profits rather than address the needs of the population, meaning that the capitalists are incapable of responding to such a set of demands. But for the working class, what is ultimately posed is the question of survival, which is why the workers must understand that the capitalist system must be overthrown by workers revolution.

AP

Charles de Gaulle Airport, August 20: French police expel Romanian gypsies during mass anti-Roma deportation campaign.

AP

Coal miners march in northern Spain to protest working conditions and unpaid wages, September 28.

For the Independence of the Trade Unions from the Bosses and Their State!

In one of his final writings, Leon Trotsky observed that a common feature of modern trade unions "is their drawing closely to and growing together with the state power" ("Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay," 1940). Trotsky emphasized that to "turn the trade unions into the organs of the broad exploited masses and not the organs of a labor aristocracy" requires the "complete and unconditional independence of the trade unions in relation to the capitalist state."

France has one of the lowest rates of unionization of any industrialized country, with as few as 5 percent of private sector workers organized. Furthermore, it is the norm for this small minority of organized workers to be divided up among several competing unions in the same workplace, which often scab on each other during strikes. The unions depend more on subsidies from the capitalist state and the bosses than on their own members' dues. How those subsidies are distributed depends largely on the various unions' relative vote totals in workplace elections, in which all workers—not just the small minority who are unionized—can vote. This means that the bureaucrats do not have the perspective of organizing the unorganized, but rather of maximizing their vote totals in workplace elections—which are run by the bosses and the state—in order to obtain a larger slice of the pie than their union competitors.

A key part of the struggle to overcome the divisions between competing union federations is the fight to forge industrial unions that unite all workers from the same industry into a single trade union, regardless of their political affiliation and work status. This is inseparable from the struggle to build a revolutionary leadership of the working class.

All the union federations—particularly the CGT, FO and UNSA (but also the SUD and CFDT)—have cops, customs officials and/or prison guards in their ranks. These bodies of armed men, who have a monopoly of armed power to enforce the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, constitute the core of the bourgeois state, an instrument of class oppression against workers and oppressed. The cop terror that has been meted out against strike pickets and youth in the *banlieues* (suburban ghettos) provides very tangible proof of the fact that police are on the other side of the class line. The bourgeois state and its armed gangs must be destroyed through a workers revolution that replaces the rule of capital with the dictatorship of the proletariat, which will have its own armed bodies. These will come from the workers militias and other red guards forged in the struggle to defend the working class against police strikebreaking and fascist terror. *Foremen, cops, prison and security guards out of the unions!*

Reforge the Fourth International! For New October Revolutions!

The *intersyndicale* coalition of union bureaucrats was seen by many workers as a guarantee of working-class unity. In fact, it has served as a means for the bureaucrats to coordinate their actions on the basis of the lowest common denominator and to mask their treachery behind the facade of "unity." The role of the "far left" in the recent strikes has been to sell the line of the *intersyndicale* bureaucrats to restive workers. Thus *Lutte Ouvrière* (22 October), writing about the union bureaucracy at SNCF (the nationalized railroad system), declared:

> "The attitude of the union leaders has also reassured the strikers. So far they have all pushed for strengthening, if not broadening the movement. This is contrary to the policy they held in 2003 and 2007 when they opposed rallies bringing different services together, visits by strikers to other sectors and even jointly held demonstrations. The movement has thus refound the tones of 1995 with the famous 'All together, all together'."

What LO leaves out is that the "All together" unity of 1995 was channeled into electing the Jospin popular-front regime—indeed, what the reformists are angling for today is another popular front.

LO has lately been fond of repeating that the elections won't change a thing and that what matters is struggle. But this is belied by their practice, which helps tie the workers to the popular front. For the past two years, LO has helped administer capitalism as part of municipal governments, including by voting for local budgets. When the Communist Party

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WikiLeaks...

(continued from page 1)

to the brutal Saddam Hussein regime, an editorial in the London *Guardiun* (26 October) noted, "One can reasonably conclude that one set of torturers and thugs has been replaced by another."

The latest WikiLeaks release was made available to the *New York Times*, the *Guardiun*, *Le Monde*, *Der Spiegel* and *Al Jazeera*. When the *New York Times* printed the exposures, the paper sought to minimize their impact by focusing obsessively on the documents' depiction of the role played by Iran in Iraq. The bourgeoisie's newspaper of record, which dutifully echoed each and every government lie that paved the road for the Iraq invasion, has joined the Obama administration's saber rattling against Iran, highlighting (22 October), "Iran's military, more than has been generally understood, intervened aggressively in support of Shiite combatants, offering weapons, training and sanctuary and in a few instances directly engaging American troops." It is vital for the international working class, especially in the U.S., to oppose U.S. imperialism's military threats against Iran and any other semicolonial country. ***U.S. hands off Iran! All U.S. and allied troops out of Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan!***

WikiLeaks' release of nearly 400,000 documents this October follows their August release of 76,000 classified military field reports from the Afghanistan occupation documenting the brutality inflicted upon civilians, including by CIA-led forces operating out of a string of bases along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. In April, the WikiLeaks Web site posted a video showing a U.S. Apache helicopter in Baghdad in 2007 gunning down and killing at least 12 people, including two Reuters journalists. All this has put WikiLeaks and its founder, Julian Assange, in the crosshairs of U.S. imperialism.

Assange and whoever helped him obtain and release the documentation of these war crimes have performed courageous and useful acts on behalf of U.S. imperialism's victims. While WikiLeaks has not divulged any of its sources, Army Private Bradley Manning, who was stationed in Iraq, was arrested last spring, shipped to solitary confinement in a military prison in Kuwait and then to the Marine base at Quantico, Virginia. He faces a court martial next year, having been charged with leaking various materials, including the cockpit video of the Apache helicopter gunship killing in Baghdad. Manning could face up to 52 years in prison.

Getty

Iraqi child covered in blood of her parents, killed by U.S. troops in Tal Afar, January 2005.

As for Assange, an Australian citizen, he is on the run, reportedly in hiding in London. Pentagon and Justice Department officials, according to the *New York Times* (23 October), "are weighing his actions under the 1917 Espionage Act," under which Socialist Party leader Eugene V. Debs was imprisoned for his opposition to the First World War. Former State Department official Christian Whiton has attacked Assange for conducting "political warfare against the US" and has called for him and his associates to be declared "enemy combatants" who can be subjected to "non-judicial actions,"—i.e., kidnapping, torture, indefinite detention and worse.

Meanwhile, Assange's bid for residence in Sweden has been rejected. With his British visa expiring early next year, Australian government spokesmen have made clear that they will cooperate with the U.S. in going after Assange, who noted that an Australian official ominously informed him, "You play outside the rules, and you will be dealt with outside the rules." Assange continues to refuse to divulge WikiLeaks' sources. He described Manning as a "political prisoner," adding: "We have a duty to assist Mr. Manning and other people who are facing legal and other consequences." Opponents of U.S. imperialism must demand: ***Free Bradley Manning now! Hands off Julian Assange and WikiLeaks!***

The persecution of Manning and Assange recalls the government vendetta against Daniel Ellsberg, who in 1971 released the Pentagon Papers. The trove of documents provided an account of over two decades of government lies and cover-ups in the service of a very different war—U.S. imperialism's dirty, losing war against the revolutionary workers and peasants of Vietnam. For his efforts, Ellsberg was viciously attacked by the Nixon administration, taken into custody and charged with theft, conspiracy and espionage. Eventually, all charges against him were dropped.

Ellsberg recently noted of Obama: "In no way, in the general defense and homeland security area, is he less opaque, more transparent, than Bush. And as I say, he's being even more aggressive in pursuing prosecution" of whistle-blowers (*Democracy Now!* 22 October). Joining Assange at a London press conference on October 23, Ellsberg denounced the Pentagon's demand that Assange return any "classified" documents, adding, "Secrecy is essential to empire."

The capitalist rulers always have gone to great lengths to conceal their crimes, both at home and abroad, through disinformation, legal prosecution and even assassination. We applaud the brave acts of those like Ellsberg and Assange. But unlike the liberals and reformists who seize upon such exposures to pressure U.S. imperialism to adopt more "humane" policies, we Marxists seek to impart the understanding that imperialist war, with all its savagery, is inherent to capitalist class rule. As we noted in "U.S. Imperialism's Torture, Inc." (*WV* No. 826, 14 May 2004): "Capitalist society was born in blood; modern imperialism continues the brutal practices of mass murder, torture and humiliation that accompany exploitation of labor and the ceaseless struggle between competing imperialist forces to dominate the world."

Only when the system of capitalism is destroyed root and branch through victorious workers revolution internationally will humanity be rid of such horrors. We look to the model of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, which overthrew capitalist rule in one-sixth of the globe and became a beacon for working people and the oppressed throughout the world. The fight to smash U.S. imperialism, the most dangerous force on the planet, requires building a revolutionary workers party independent of all capitalist parties and dedicated to the establishment of working-class rule.■

France...

(continued from page 9)

mayor of Bagnolet—a municipality in the Paris suburbs where LO is in a governing coalition with its senior partners in the PCF—forcibly evicted the tenants of an apartment building partly occupied by African workers last winter, LO condemned this racist action. But they treacherously remained in the coalition, providing a left cover for their municipal partners (see "Lutte Ouvrière's Municipal Antics," *WV* No. 960, 4 June).

LO recently signed on to the popular-front slate for the December municipal election in Corbeil-Essonnes, south of Paris, in order to "fight the right." Alongside the PCF, the PS and the Greens, LO has set out to locally manage capitalism on a program that denounces the right-wing municipality's "failure regarding security" and pledges to "put in the resources" to change this situation—in other words, more racist cops to terrorize the ghetto. At the national level, the next alliance of class collaboration being planned for the 2012 elections between bourgeois parties and workers parties looks set to take on a pink-green hue, with reformist workers parties like the PS, the PCF and Jean-Luc Mélenchon's Left Party joined by the Green Party and some other bourgeois forces (like the Left Radicals and supporters of capitalist politician Jean-Pierre Chevènement).

This class-collaborationist lash-up can be certain of receiving the electoral support of Besancenot's NPA. The NPA was founded in 2009 out of the thoroughly social-democratic Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR). In founding the NPA, the LCR openly renounced Trotskyism, revolution and communism—after having done so in practice for decades—in a rare mark of honesty demonstrating the extent to which they imbibe the bourgeoisie's "death of communism" myth. They also inscribed in the NPA's "founding principles" their openness to participating in a bourgeois government, declaring: "We will contribute to their implementation [of progressive measures] if the voters give us such a responsibility." During the 2007 elections, Besancenot stated his willingness to join a bourgeois government coalition, provided it called itself "anti-capitalist," declaring, "the LCR will assume its responsibilities in such a government."

For decades, the LCR voted for the candidates of successive popular-front coalitions, from Mitterrand to Jospin to Ségolène Royal in 2007. They also voted in the 2008 Marseille municipal elections for the slate led by Socialists that included right-wing bourgeois politicians—these same Socialists recently called on the state to crush the Marseille port workers strike. The NPA, whose forebears in the LCR voted for the right-wing Jacques Chirac in 2002, when he was opposed by the fascist Jean-Marie Le Pen, should hardly have a problem stomaching a vote for a Socialist candidate—including current IMF head Dominique Strauss-Kahn, who openly supported Sarkozy's attacks on pensions.

LO, NPA, et al. have something fundamental in common: They reject the 1917 October Revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. They all supported the various counterrevolutionary forces that destroyed the Soviet Union and deformed workers states of East Europe in the late 1980s-early 1990s. To the extent of their limited forces, they thus contributed to the victory of capitalist counterrevolution. The working class must reappropriate Marxism and the lessons of the Bolshevik Revolution. The International Communist League, of which the LTF is a section, represents the programmatic continuity of the Bolshevik party of Lenin and Trotsky. We fight to build the internationalist revolutionary workers party that is indispensable for leading the next revolutionary uprisings of the proletariat to victory.■

Bolshevik Revolution...

(continued from page 2)

chain that broke, and not only the link.

Capitalism has outlived itself as a world system. It has ceased to fulfill its essential mission, the increase of human power and human wealth. Humanity cannot stand still at the level which it has reached. Only a powerful increase in productive force and a sound, planned, that is, Socialist organization of production and distribution can assure humanity—all humanity—of a decent standard of life and at the same time give it the precious feeling of freedom with respect to its own economy. Freedom in two senses—first of all, man will no longer be compelled to devote the greater part of his life to physical labor. Second, he will no longer be dependent on the laws of the market, that is, on the blind and dark forces which have grown up behind his back. He will build up his economy freely, that is, according to a plan, with compass in hand. This time it is a question of subjecting the anatomy of society to the X-ray through and through, of disclosing all its secrets and subjecting all its functions to the reason and the will of collective humanity. In this sense, Socialism must become a new step in the historical advance of mankind. Before our ancestor, who first armed himself with a stone axe, the whole of *nature* represented a conspiracy of secret and hostile forces. Since then, the natural sciences, hand in hand with practical technology, have illuminated nature down to its most secret depths. By means of electrical energy, the physicist passes judgment on the nucleus of the atom. The hour is not far when science will easily solve the task of the alchemists, and turn manure into gold and gold into manure. Where the demons and furies of nature once raged, now rules ever more courageously the industrial will of man.

But while he wrestled victoriously with nature, man built up his relations to other men blindly, almost like the bee or the ant. Belatedly and most undecidedly he approached the problems of human society. He began with religion, and passed on to politics. The Reformation represented the first victory of bourgeois individualism and rationalism in a domain which had been ruled by dead tradition. From the church, critical thought went on to the state. Born in the struggle with absolutism and the medieval estates, the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people and of the rights of man and the citizen grew stronger. Thus arose the system of parliamentarism. Critical thought penetrated into the domain of government administration. The political rationalism of democracy was the highest achievement of the revolutionary bourgeoisie.

But between nature and the state stands economic life. Technology liberated man from the tyranny of the old elements—earth, water, fire and air—only to subject him to its own tyranny. Man ceased to be a slave to nature, to become a slave to the machine, and, still worse, a slave to supply and demand. The present world crisis testifies in especially tragic fashion how man, who dives to the bottom of the ocean, who rises up to the stratosphere, who converses on invisible waves with the Antipodes, how this proud and daring ruler of nature remains a slave to the blind forces of his own economy. The historical task of our epoch consists in replacing the uncontrolled play of the market by reasonable planning, in disciplining the forces of production, compelling them to work together in harmony and obediently serve the needs of mankind. Only on this new social basis will man be able to stretch his weary limbs and—every man and every woman, not only a selected few—become a full citizen in the realm of thought.

—"Leon Trotsky Defends the October Revolution"
(*Militant*, 21 January 1933)■

Guatemala...

(continued from page 12)

Such crimes are not a thing of the past. To the capitalist rulers, minorities and the colonial and semicolonial slaves of imperialism are "inferior" and "expendable." In Africa in the late 1990s, the U.S. and the UN funded 15 studies on mother-to-infant HIV transmission that used a placebo instead of AZT—even as AZT was known to effectively block this type of HIV transmission. Some 1,500 infants were expected to die. Such experiments continue to this day. As Harriet A. Washington, the author of *Medical Apartheid*, noted in a 2007 *Democracy Now!* interview, "Africa is being treated as a laboratory for the West by Western researchers."

The Obama White House was quick to offer its cynical apologies for the Guatemala study—which was carried out under the Democratic Truman administration—expressing "deep regret" about the "reprehensible research." This is but a sneer at the countless numbers of Iraqi, Afghani and other prisoners that the U.S. has rounded up and subjected to waterboarding and other forms of torture. The U.S. employs doctors to watch over its inquisitors in order to "refine" their methods of torture and to make sure that their victims live to see another day of torment.

Burns Archive

During infamous "Tuskegee Experiment" of 1932-72, black men with syphilis were denied penicillin and given bogus "treatment" for "bad blood."

Six years after the Guatemala experiment ended, the U.S. carried out a bloody coup there and for the next several decades installed one brutal dictatorship after another. Between 1960 and 1996, more than 200,000 Mayan villagers, trade unionists and leftist insurgents were slaughtered, as the U.S. directed the transformation of a monstrous but inefficient military gang into an organized machine of systematic mass murder. As part of its war on Communism, the U.S. armed and trained murderers and torturers throughout Central America. To this day, the infamous School of the Americas (now renamed WHINSEC) in Fort Benning, Georgia, trains U.S. imperialism's Latin American henchmen to torture and butcher unionists, leftists and peasants.

None of this is an aberration. Such atrocities are inherent to the capitalist system of production. Even under the "ordinary" everyday workings of imperialism, billions of human beings across the planet must suffer starvation and thirst. They must die excruciating deaths from curable diseases. They must endure cruelty, humiliation, terror or even death at the hands of police and the military. They must feel their bodies break down from work that barely pays enough to prolong their lives another year while the profits from their labor fill the capitalist rulers' multibillion-dollar bank accounts.

It will take the working class seizing power through socialist revolution—above all in the belly of the U.S. imperialist beast—to put an end to this barbaric capitalist system. As Marxist leader Rosa Luxemburg underlined during the carnage of the First World War, the choice facing humanity is: ***socialism or barbarism.***■

Oscar Grant...

(continued from page 12)

against the working class and oppressed—frame-ups, lies, police terror and murder. The cops are the hired guns of the ruling class whose purpose is to maintain capitalist rule through violence: breaking strikes, rounding up ghetto and barrio youth, repressing social protest. But left-talking trade-union bureaucrats like Heyman and the bureaucracy's water boys in the reformist left, who were at the rally peddling various schemes to make the cops "accountable," try to lull the working class into believing that they can obtain "justice" from the courts of the capitalist class enemy.

Speaking out of the other side of his mouth at the October 20 press conference, Heyman allowed, "I don't believe that there's justice in the courts, that's my opinion." But rather than warning workers against such illusions, Heyman deceived them, stating that "we're sending a message to the powers-that-be that justice has to be served." A rally leaflet promised that "together we can make sure that the killer cop gets the maximum sentence," while several speakers at the rally argued that it was only because of the protests against Grant's killing that Mehserle was convicted. That is true, but the purpose of the conviction was to try to put the lid on the mounting fury directed against racist police terror. Even in the event that Mehserle serves jail time, the reason would be to refurbish illusions in the state as some kind of "neutral" arbiter that could serve the interest of the exploited and oppressed. On the rare occasion that the capitalist rulers are forced to "punish" one of their gendarmes, the aim is to bolster the effectiveness of the state's armed forces in repressing the working class, black people, immigrants and any and all perceived enemies of the capitalist state.

As the 12 January 2009 statement by the Bay Area LBL, calling to "Mobilize the Power of the Multiracial Unions in Protest!" observed:

> "The hard truth is that there will be no end to police brutality short of the destruction of this entire system of capitalist exploitation and racial oppression. But a massive protest based on the organized muscle of the labor movement would give the cops and their capitalist masters some pause. And it would drive home the point that the interests of the working class are inseparably linked to the defense of the ghettos and barrios, the defense of immigrant rights and the fight for black freedom.
>
> "The Labor Black League for Social Defense stands for mobilizing the masses of black, immigrant and all working people in integrated struggle based on a program of ***class struggle***—the understanding that the interests of the working class are irreconcilably counterposed to those of the capitalist class exploiters, their state forces and agencies and their political parties, be they Democrat, Republican or Green."

Break with the Democrats! For a Class-Struggle Workers Party!

When asked in an interview on KPFA radio whether the timing of the rally might also have something to do with mobilizing for the November 2 midterm elections, Local 10 executive board member Clarence Thomas responded that this would be a mobilization "independent of the two political parties" and that there would be no Democratic or Republican politicians on the platform. There weren't. However, this doubtless had more to do with the fact that appearing at a rally to protest the police execution of Oscar Grant was too hot to handle for the capitalist Democratic Party candidates who are vying for electoral support from the growing army of cops, prison and security guards in California. Chiming in behind Thomas, Heyman offered that "people can go to the ballot box if they want," but once again in his "opinion," "the candidates that are running for mayor in Oakland are all pro-cop."

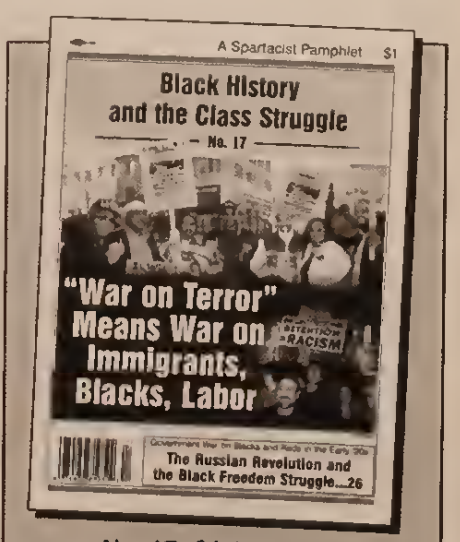
What neither Thomas nor Heyman mentioned is that the ILWU International and the Local 10 bureaucracy, of which they are longtime members, have been pulling out all the stops to mobilize the membership to get out the vote for the Democrats, who represent the very capitalist system that the cops are sworn to "protect and serve." This includes California gubernatorial candidate Jerry Brown, a former Oakland mayor, whose cops fired rubber bullets and other "non-lethal" projectiles at longshoremen during an antiwar protest on the Oakland docks in 2003. One of his first acts on taking his present office of California attorney general (the state's top cop) was to arrest the former Black Panthers of the San Francisco 8 on frame-up charges that had been thrown out over 30 years ago!

At the rally, Thomas declared: "We want union jobs! We want living wage jobs! We want jobs for residents of West Oakland." The increasingly impoverished and destitute conditions of life for the black population of the West Oakland ghetto are a deeply felt issue for many black longshoremen, who also take a lot of pride in the gains that were made for black workers in the Bay Area through the class battles that built the ILWU. But Thomas' call for jobs is not based on any perspective of struggle. Rather the ILWU Local 10 misleaders are going all out to get the membership to campaign for Democratic mayoral candidate Jean Quan by promising she will back the ILWU in getting the jobs that will be opening up with the development of an intermodal terminal at the former Oakland army base. Meanwhile, the Teamsters are backing Quan's fellow Democratic Party contender for Oakland mayor, Don Perata, to the same purpose—i.e., as their ticket to jurisdictional "rights" at the terminal.

Thus, although much was made of labor unity at the October 23 rally, behind the scenes is the sordid competition of the ILWU and Teamsters bureaucrats, who pit union against union in the scramble for jobs while shackling workers to the bosses' parties. What is needed is joint struggle by the ILWU, Teamsters and other unions to protect everyone's job and extend union rights to all workers in the industry. This includes organizing the unorganized, such as the thousands of largely immigrant port truckers. But to the contrary, the misleaders of both unions point to these workers as a potential "threat to national security," as part of their pledge of allegiance to the government's "war on terror." It is precisely these politics of class collaboration that have deeply eroded the fighting strength of the unions, leaving the ILWU increasingly isolated in a sea of unorganized workers on the West Coast ports.

The killing of Oscar Grant in Oakland, where liberal black Democrat Ron Dellums is mayor, brutally exposes the hoax that the election of a black man, Barack Obama, as president represented progress toward black equality. Amidst the increasing devastation of the livelihoods and very lives of the working class and poor, particularly blacks and immigrants, illusions in Obama are eroding. The Local 10 leadership tries to refurbish support for the Democrats with the promise of union jobs. The bureaucracy's double-talkers like Heyman and Thomas simply give this game a "labor struggle" cover, claiming to mobilize the union's power independent of the bosses' parties against cop terror while peddling deadly illusions in the inherent "justice" of this system.

A genuine fight against police terror must be built in implacable opposition to the capitalist state and its political parties. It also must entail an unwavering commitment to the fight against black oppression, attacks on immigrants and every other manifestation of the tyranny and barbarity of this system. To lead this struggle requires a new class-struggle leadership of the labor movement and the forging of a multiracial revolutionary workers party. As the Bay Area LBL statement concluded, such a party "will lead the way to uprooting this system of exploitation and oppression, which is enforced by racist cop terror. When those who labor rule, the tremendous wealth of this society, created by the working class, will be used to wipe out racial oppression and provide a decent life for the working class, blacks, immigrants, women, the poor, the young and the aged."■



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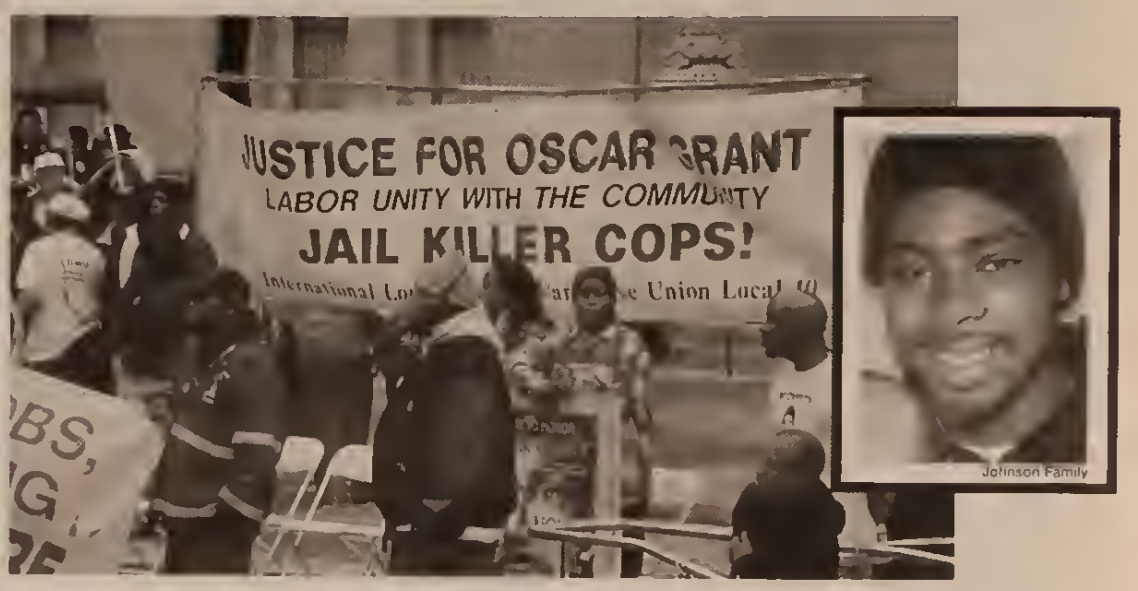
WORKERS VANGUARD

ILWU-Initiated Rally Demands "Justice for Oscar Grant"

There Is No Justice in the Capitalist Courts!



WV Photos

Left: Spartacist and Labor Black League supporters at October 23 rally in Oakland protesting 2009 cop killing of Oscar Grant (inset). Right: ILWU banner at rally. Local 10 tops' call to "Jail Killer Cops" promotes illusion that working people can get justice from capitalist courts.

Hundreds came out for a rally at Oakland City Hall on October 23 to demand "Justice for Oscar Grant"—the young black apprentice grocery butcher who was executed in cold blood by Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) cop Johannes Mehserle on New Year's Day 2009. The rally was initiated by Local 10 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), which moved its regular monthly stop-work meeting to the same day, shutting down Bay Area ports for eight hours. At the rally, a contingent of some 50 to 100 mainly black longshoremen reflected the deeply felt anger over the racist cop terror that is a daily and deadly fact of life in the inner cities of this country. The longshoremen were joined by representatives of other unions, including the Service Employees International Union Local 1021 and the Oakland Education Association.

The video images of Mehserle shooting Grant in the back—as he lay pinned by another cop face down with hands behind his back on the Fruitvale BART platform—ignited an outpouring of anger against police terror on the streets of Oakland. The July 8 verdict of "involuntary manslaughter" handed down to Mehserle by a jury that included not one black person, in a trial that was moved from Oakland to Los Angeles, was another slap in the face. At the July meeting of Local 10, Oscar Grant's uncle, Cephus Johnson, appealed for the union to mobilize in protest. This struck a real chord among the membership, which is majority black.

Addressing the justified explosion of outrage over Grant's killing, a 12 January 2009 statement by the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense, which is fraternally allied with the Spartacist League/U.S., fought for a class-struggle perspective, calling to "link the anger of the ghettos and barrios to the power of *our class*, the multiracial labor movement." But rather than a militant mobilization of labor's power in opposition to the capitalist state and its police killers, the organizers of the October 23 rally channeled this anger into appeals for the capitalist state to "jail killer cops." At an October 20 press conference, Local 10 executive board member Jack Heyman, a central organizer and an emcee of the rally, said, "Cops have to go to jail when they commit a crime just like anyone else." While the jails of this country overflow with victims of the marauding cops, Heyman seizes upon the widespread disgust with the slap-on-the-wrist verdict for Mehserle to promote the lie that the cops' capitalist masters will punish their armed thugs if they "commit a crime."

The entire system of capitalist "law and order" is enforced through crimes

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Sadistic U.S. "Tuskegee Experiment" in Guatemala

Last month, the news got out that U.S. government doctors exposed hundreds of Guatemalan prisoners, soldiers, prostitutes and mental patients to syphilis in 1946-48. Medical historian Susan Reverby uncovered this barbaric crime in the papers of Dr. John Cutler while researching her book, *Examining Tuskegee*. Cutler was the head of the Guatemala experiment, which was co-sponsored by the "humanist" regime of Juan José Arévalo. Afterward, Cutler joined the infamous "Tuskegee experiment" of 1932-72. During that period, U.S. government officials denied life-saving penicillin to hundreds of black men in Alabama with syphilis. The purpose of this "study" was to watch the ravages of the disease as it destroyed the men's bodies and minds.

In Guatemala, Cutler and his assistants brought infected prostitutes into the prisons to have sex with healthy men. Uninfected prostitutes had the bacteria inserted into their vaginas before sex. At the mental hospital, Cutler and his ghouls injected the disease directly into the patients' spines or made them drink solutions containing syphilitic sores of other men or animal tissue. Another "technique" was to scrape a man's penis with a needle and drip the bacterial solution onto the wound for up to two hours at a time.

Cutler's victims, who were derided as "rahhits," did not know what they were being infected with, and no one knows how many died as a result. The 700 people infected supposedly received treatment. But one physician from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that about one-third did not receive enough penicillin to cure them. Cutler's papers documented some resistance from his victims. One man ran away but was found two hours later. Others opposed the constant drawing of blood. A researcher lamented in his notes, "Unfortunately our female donor is leaving her profession for marriage and is no longer available."

These inhuman torments recall Dr. Josef Mengele and the Nazi experiments on Jews, Gypsies and others held in concentration camps. The Guatemala experiment took place while the U.S. and other Allies were trying fascist war criminals at Nuremberg in 1945-49. The U.S. smuggled to safety many Nazi military officers, concentration camp doctors and prison guards. The U.S. saved Mengele, while Dr. Hubertus Strughold, associated with the experiments at Dachau, was brought to the U.S. to strengthen its military research apparatus. As U.S. imperialism geared up its anti-Soviet Cold War drive, America's rulers knew they couldn't let all that Nazi "talent" go to waste.

The U.S. carried out Nazi-like experiments on poor, working-class and black people. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers were sent into irradiated blast sites after atomic bombs were set off. As Washington actively pursued plans for a nuclear "first strike" against the USSR, America's rulers wanted to know how much radiation their troops could stand in order to train them to subdue survivors of an atomic attack. Poor pregnant women seeking medical care were fed highly radioactive iron, while Harvard and MIT scientists fed breakfast cereal laced with radioactive doses equivalent to 50 chest X-rays to more than 120 mentally retarded teenagers, telling their parents the children were receiving an improved diet.

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WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 969

19 November 2010

Democrats, Republicans: Parties of Exploitation, Oppression and War

Hafalia/SF Chronicle

Garcia/Chicago Tribune

Labor Must Defend Black and Immigrant Rights!

For a Workers Party to Fight for a Workers Government!

Left: Demonstrator arrested at July 8 Oakland protest against verdict in cop killing of Oscar Grant. Right: Immigrants in El Paso being prepared for deportation to Mexico, January 2009.

With the backdrop of an economic crisis that has thrown millions out of their jobs and homes, the midterm elections emitted an odor that was rancid even by the usual standards of American bourgeois politics. The Tea Party stoked the fires of racism and anti-immigrant bigotry to "energize" the Republicans' base and win over some disaffected whites who voted for Barack Obama in 2008. For its part, the Obama White House continued its assault on "illegal" immigrants, having deported an all-time high of 387,790 in 2009, while Democratic candidates tried to appeal to workers fearful of more job losses by spewing crude protectionist venom against the Chinese deformed workers state.

The Republicans now control the House (although not the Senate, where some Tea Party candidates proved to be too whacked-out for many Republican voters to stomach) and eleven more governorships. Their heads in their hands, reformist "socialists" echo liberal pundits in moaning how the Democrats have "blown" the opportunity they were given with Obama's election in 2008 by catering to big business. "Obama and the Democrats failed to take decisive action to alleviate the crushing pressure of widespread unemployment, rampant home foreclosures and devastating budget cuts," the International Socialist Organization (ISO) editorialized in the November *Socialist Worker*. Similarly for the Party for Socialism and Liberation, the big factor in the elections was "unemployment, foreclosures, loss of health and pension benefits—and what the administration and the Democrats did and, more importantly, didn't do about it" (PSLweb.org, 9 November).

Obama made clear from the beginning what he would "do about it," declaring to a mammoth Chicago crowd cheering his 2008 election the need for "a new spirit of sacrifice." This sermonizing was not, of course, directed at Wall Street, whose operatives Obama would prominently place in his administration, the better to bail out failing banks and, with the complicity of the craven UAW union tops, the auto companies. Abetted by the labor tops and the reformists, the Democratic Party postures as the "friend" of labor, blacks and the poor, making the Democrats more effective than the Republicans in demanding sacrifice from working people and launching imperialist adventures abroad. Where the Republicans openly attack workers and minorities, the Democrats lie and do the same thing.

As chief executive of U.S. imperialism, Obama has done his job. He has tripled U.S. forces in the murderous occupation of Afghanistan, where the purported withdrawal date is 2014. What such "withdrawal" might mean can be seen in Iraq, where 50,000 U.S. troops remain along with thousands of U.S.-paid mercenaries. In competition against America's imperialist rivals, the Federal Reserve is releasing $600 billion, which will serve to depreciate the value of the dollar, thus boosting U.S. exports, and to encourage further investment bubbles. Meanwhile, with the number of long-term unemployed in the U.S. at a record level, extended unemployment benefits are due to expire at the end of this month.

The essence of capitalist "democracy" is, as Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin put it in *The State and Revolution* (1917), that "the oppressed are allowed once every few years to decide which particular representative of the oppressing class shall represent and repress them in parliament!" No sooner had he acknowledged the Democrats' "shellacking" at the polls than Obama declared his intention to seek "compromise" with the Republicans to extend the tax cuts for the rich that were enacted by George W. Bush. Nicholas Kristof noted in a *New York Times* (6 November) column titled "Our Banana Republic" that "both parties agree on extending tax cuts on the first $250,000 of incomes, even for billionaires."

The CEOs of the largest U.S. companies, who earned on average 42 times as much as the average worker in 1980, made *531 times* as much in 2001. As of 2007, the top 1 percent of American income earners took in almost 24 percent of the country's pretax income, up from less than 9 percent in 1976. The massive increase in the gap between that tiny handful and the rest of the populace has been overseen by both the Democratic and Republican parties of capital, beginning with the Democratic Carter administration in the late 1970s. This has been due in no small part to a continual assault on labor and has gone along with the massive incarceration of blacks, as well as Latinos.

continued on page 8

AP

November 2006: Workers at Smithfield meatpacking plant in North Carolina walked off the job to protest firing of immigrants. Workers won unionization two years later.

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An Exchange on M.N. Roy

August 23, 2010

To the editor of Workers Vanguard:

In your article on India, in the July 30th issue of Workers Vanguard [No. 962], you label the pioneer Indian Communist, M.N. Roy, a "pseudo-Marxist adventurer." That is one-sided, to say the least.

As a young man, Roy joined a group of brave Bengali revolutionaries who were willing to sacrifice their lives to drive the British from India through force of bombs and bullets. Inspired by the Bolshevik Revolution, Roy became a Communist and made his way to Moscow in 1920 for the Second Comintern Congress, where he changed Lenin's thinking in the debate on the national-colonial question. As his contemporary, Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, noted at that time, "Roy had the support of Trotsky, Zinoviev, Bukharin, Radek."

Right after the congress, Lenin dispatched his new protege, with two trainloads of weapons, to remote Tashkent, then a dangerous wilderness, to set up a Communist academy to train cadres for future operations inside British India. It was none other than Trotsky, the commander of the Red Army, who had first proposed this "adventure" a year earlier. After his return to Russia, Roy established his credentials as a first-class Marxist theoretician with his book, India in Transition, which Lenin praised as the first Marxist analysis of India.

Having earned the trust and admiration of the top Bolshevik leaders, Roy rose quickly in the Comintern apparatus. He was regarded as a "leftist" in the political spectrum of the Comintern. If you read his writings in the early 'twenties, you'll be surprised at how "Trotskyist" they sound.

You denounce Roy for advocating the formation of nationalist "Peoples' Parties" in the colonies in 1926. In fact, Roy first mooted this policy at the Fourth Comintern Congress in 1922. Neither Lenin nor Trotsky objected. Roy developed this thesis jointly with Karl Radek, the secretary of the Comintern who was allied with Trotsky.

As your tendency has pointed out before, there were weaknesses in some of the experimental Comintern policies in the early 1920s. The whole motivation and purpose of the "workers-peasants party" changed qualitatively between 1922 and 1927.

Let me remind you what James P. Cannon, the leader of the American Trotskyist party, once said about flippant denunciations of Grigory Zinoviev, the Soviet leader who led the vicious, self-serving demagogic attack on Leon Trotsky after Lenin's death: "I have always been outraged by the impudent pretensions of so many little people to deprecate Zinoviev, and I feel that he deserves justification before history. I have no doubt whatever that in all his big actions, including his most terrible errors, he was motivated fundamentally by devotion to the higher interests of the working class of the whole world...In spite of all, Zinoviev deserves restoration as one of the great hero-martyrs of the revolution."

And so does Manabendra Nath Roy.

Charles Wesley Ervin

_WV_ replies:

M.N. Roy, whom Ervin so rhapsodizes, was briefly a prominent figure in the early Communist movement, having been recruited from the Indian nationalist movement. After falling out of favor in the Stalinized Communist International (CI), he aligned himself with the Right Opposition led by Nikolai Bukharin and was expelled from the CI in 1929. (As Leon Trotsky asserted, the victory of the program of the Right Opposition would have led to capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union in short order.) Roy rapidly reverted to his roots by becoming an increasingly open apologist for bourgeois nationalism, notably as an advocate of class collaboration with the bourgeois Indian National Congress, later the Congress Party. Revolutionary Marxists fight for national liberation of the colonies and neocolonies of imperialism, but we do not support nationalism, a bourgeois ideology which is an obstacle to social revolution.

Charles Wesley Ervin is the author of a recent book on the history of Trotskyism in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and India, *Tomorrow Is Ours* (2006). Particularly useful from Ervin's book is the powerful 1942 program of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India. While Ervin has cast himself as an apologist for Roy, the BLPI (like us) had a few choice words concerning Roy's pernicious role. Ervin's own text is also informative. He quotes Roy as coming out for "a political party representing the workers and peasants" at the Fourth CI Congress in 1922. Ervin adds: "After the Fourth Congress Roy pursued the People's Party strategy for India. He wrote article after article, and ultimately a whole book, on how to transform the Congress [Party] into 'a democratic party of the people with a programme of Revolutionary Nationalism'." To be accurate, even prior to the Fourth Congress Roy was already arguing that workers and peasants have the same class interests.

Contrary to Ervin's imputations, Trotsky from the start gave no quarter to the

continued on page 5

no credit

1927 execution of Chinese Communist, one of tens of thousands massacred by bourgeois-nationalist Guomindang.

TROTSKY

LENIN

Irish Independence and the English Proletariat

Writing when all of Ireland was under British rule, Karl Marx stressed that for the proletariat in England to develop its class consciousness, it must champion Irish independence. Today, the emancipation of the working class in Britain remains inextricably linked to that of the workers in both Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic, posing the need for proletarian revolutions that establish a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles.

I have become more and more convinced—and the thing now is to drum this conviction into the English working class—that they will never be able to do anything decisive here in England before they separate their attitude towards Ireland quite definitely from that of the ruling classes, and not only make common cause with the Irish, but even take the initiative in dissolving the Union established in 1801, and substituting a free federal relationship for it. And this must be done not out of sympathy for Ireland, but as a demand based on the interests of the English proletariat. If not, the English people will remain bound to the leading-strings of the ruling classes, because *they* will be forced to make a common front with them against Ireland. Every movement of the working class in England itself is crippled by the dissension with the Irish, who form a very important section of the working class in England itself. The ***primary condition*** for emancipation here—the overthrow of the English landed oligarchy—remains unattainable, since its positions cannot be stormed here as long as it holds its strongly-entrenched outposts in Ireland. But over there, once affairs have been laid in the hands of the Irish people themselves, as soon as they have made themselves their own legislators and rulers, as soon as they have become autonomous, it will be infinitely easier there than here to abolish the landed aristocracy (to a large extent ***the same persons*** as the English landlords) since in Ireland it is not just merely an economic question, but also a ***national*** one, as the landlords there are not, as they are in England, traditional dignitaries and representatives, but the mortally-hated oppressors of the nationality....

In fact, England never has and never *can* rule Ireland any other way, as long as the present relationship continues—only with the most abominable reign of terror and the most reprehensible corruption.

—Karl Marx, Letter to Ludwig Kugelmann (29 November 1869)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is November 16.

No. 969 **19 November 2010**

Letter from Indian Trotskyist

We received the following letter from a longtime supporter of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) on September 26.

Dear comrades,

The article on India published in WV, No. 962, 30 July, 2010 is highly impressive and informative. I wish to clarify certain points in the article only.

CPI(M) [Communist Party of India (Marxist)] split from CPI in 1964, three years before the Naxalite split from the CPI(M). As a matter of fact, the CPI was divided into two cliques from almost its beginning. As early as 1928, two men S.V. Despande and B.T. Ranadive joined the Bombay group of the party. Despande became a follower of S.A. Dange and B.T. Ranadive acted at the behest of G.D. Adhikari. Even while in Mearut jail, the clique fight had assumed such a proportion that Dange was expelled from the party. Later Ranadive became the leader of his own clique while Adhikari shifted to the clique of Dange who had been readmitted later. So the clique fight continued. However some excuse was needed to precipitate a split and it was provided by two things, namely, Moscow-Peking dispute following Khrushchev's revelations at the 20th Congress of the CPSU [Communist Party of the Soviet Union] and Indo-China border war in 1962. However, there was no essential ideological difference between the two as anyone who reads the post-split documents of the CPI and CPI(M) will realize.

Regarding anti-Indian, anti-Hindi hysteria in Nepal supported by the Maoists, I hasten to add that while we do not and cannot support such hysteria, it is rooted in big-brotherly attitude of the Indian bourgeoisie displayed time and again by its government. It goes back to 1950 when India signed the Gandak Treaty to build a dam in Nepal on a river India shares with Nepal. I am not well informed about its contents but there was a feeling in Nepal that the treaty benefitted India at the expense of Nepal. Moreover, time and again, Indian government has supported monarchy and other reactionary forces and came to their rescue whenever they were threatened by the peasant revolts in Nepal.

Parallel to anti-India hysteria in Nepal is the anti-Nepali hysteria in India, particularly in West Bengal. Poverty and absence of any opportunities of employment, medical care and decent education drove people of Nepal to neighboring lands. End of the British rule in India deprived Gorkhas of the chances of getting enlisted in the British Army. However, an agreement between India and Nepal signed in 1950 permitted free movement and trade between the two countries. So a number of Hindi speaking people settled in Nepal while people from Nepal got settled in Darjeeling (in West Bengal) and in the kingdom of Sikkim and became a majority in both areas in course of time. Political impact of this development was not felt immediately. But it came to be felt by 1975. The kingdom of Sikkim was annexed by India in 1975 as the Nepali speaking persons (who had become a majority reducing the original Lepcha people to a minority) voted for accession to India in a plebiscite conducted under the supervision of Indian army. Sikkim is a constituent state of Indian Union since then and monarchy is abolished. Frightened by the phenomenon, the kingdom of

continued on page 4

Free the Class-War Prisoners!

"The mills of capitalist justice grind out victims for the penitentiary....
"In one sense of the word the whole of capitalist society is a prison. For the great mass of people who do the hard, useful work there is no such word as freedom. They come and go at the order of a few. Their lives are regulated according to the needs and wishes of a few. A censorship is put upon their words and deeds. The fruits of their labor are taken from them. And if, by chance, they have the instinct and spirit to rebel, if they take their place in the vanguard of the fight for justice, the prisons are waiting."

—James P. Cannon, "The Cause that Passes Through a Prison" (*Labor Defender*, September 1926)

Following in the tradition of Cannon's International Labor Defense (ILD), the Partisan Defense Committee honors the class-war prisoners—those brave men and women railroaded to prison for standing up to racist capitalist oppression—irrespective of their particular political views or affiliation. Twenty-five years ago, the PDC revived the ILD program of providing monthly stipends to class-war prisoners and additional funds for their birthdays as well as holiday gifts for them and their families. We raise money for this unique and necessary program during the holiday season. Fund-raising efforts will include benefits in Chicago on December 18, New York City on January 21 and Toronto on January 28.

The $25 monthly stipends help ease a little bit the horrors of "life" in capitalist dungeons. More importantly, they are a necessary expression of solidarity with these prisoners—a message that they are not forgotten. In letters to the PDC before last year's Holiday Appeal, the prisoners gave a glimpse of what the program means to them:

Hugo Pinell: "Your care and solidarity has provided me with extra strength and drive to keep on pushing and evolving and i hope that my company has served you well. I am with you, in life and struggle."

Janine Africa: "I want to thank everybody for yalls support all of these years. I'm not just talking about the holiday donations, I'm talking about the work yall do for the release of political prisoners from prison."

Jaan Laaman: "This solidarity and support is important and necessary for us political prisoners, especially as the years and decades of our captivity grind on.... Being in captivity is certainly harsh, and this includes the sufferings of our children and families and friends. But prison walls and sentences do not and can not stop struggle."

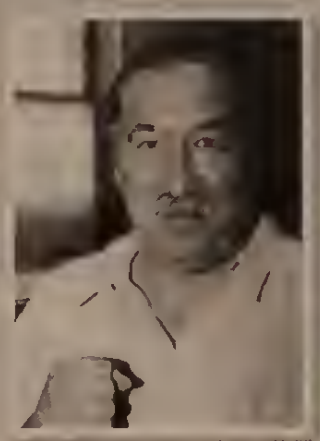
Tom Manning, Laaman's Ohio 7 comrade: "Just so you know, it [the stipend] goes for bags of mackerel and jars of peanut butter, to supplement my protein needs."

The struggle to free all class-war prisoners is critical to educating a new generation of fighters for the oppressed. This is given added meaning as we build for this Holiday Appeal. Persecution of those imprisoned for their political views and actions has not only continued unabated, but Obama and his top cop, Attorney General Eric Holder, are making reservations for many more to join them. The Obama administration has launched an ominous escalation of state repression, accelerating the repressive measures adopted during the Clinton/Bush years that will be wielded against those who propelled him to office—labor, blacks, immigrants and leftist youth.

Mumia Abu-Jamal, whose case will again be a focus of the Holiday Appeal, is threatened with the reinstitution of the death sentence (see article, page 12).

25th Annual PDC Holiday Appeal

Jennifer Beach
Mumia Abu-Jamal



Ben Corbett
Leonard Peltier

WV Photo
Lynne Stewart

Chicago

Saturday, December 18
4 to 7 p.m.
U.E. Hall
37 S. Ashland
(at Monroe)
For info.: (312) 563-0442

New York City

Friday, January 21
6 to 9 p.m.
La Pregunta Arts Cafe
1528 Amsterdam Ave.
(Manhattan, 135th/136th St.)
For info.: (212) 406-4252

Toronto

Friday, January 28
7 to 10 p.m.
Steelworkers Hall
25 Cecil Street
(1 block south of College at Ross St., west of Queen's Park Sta.)
For info.: (416) 593-4138

Sponsored by the Partisan Defense Committee
(212) 406-4252 • partisandefense@earthlink.net • www.partisendefense.org

The PDC is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization which champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League.

Illustration by Deni

AP

Minneapolis, September 24: Antiwar activist Meredith Aby, whose home was raided by FBI, speaking at press conference.

Seventy-one-year-old leftist lawyer Lynne Stewart has been resentenced to ten years in prison for the "crime" of representing her client. The PDC has added Stewart to the stipend recipients. In Chicago and Minneapolis, the FBI recently raided the homes of leftists, antiwar activists and unionists under the rubric of the "war on terrorism." Among those targeted were members of the Freedom Road Socialist Organization and others, who have run afoul of Washington for their open support to leftist rebels in Colombia opposed to the U.S. puppet regime, the secular-nationalist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Iranian-backed Lebanese Hezbollah.

In February, Obama signed into law yet another extension of the USA Patriot Act with its provisions of indefinite detention, expansion of secret FBI searches of homes and offices and elimination of formal restrictions on domestic spying, wiretapping and Internet surveillance. The message to all who would fight against the ravages of the capitalist economic crisis, war and racist repression: This is what's in store for you if you step out of line.

The PDC initiated the stipend program at the height of the reactionary Reagan years, defining features of which included the destruction of the PATCO air traffic controllers union, the bombing of the Philadelphia MOVE commune and efforts to classify leftists and union militants as terrorists and criminals. It was an important component of fighting efforts to criminalize leftist political dissent—and it remains so today, as the "war on terror" has given the government repressive powers that Reagan could only dream of.

We have provided stipends to over 30 prisoners, including eight union militants, on three continents. Many of these prisoners, largely victims of the racist rulers' war against militant black activists, have been there from nearly the beginning of our stipends program. The government has repeatedly demonstrated its determination to make sure they die behind bars from old age or medical neglect—or in the case of Mumia, by legal lynching. In fighting for their freedom, we are dedicated to searing the injustice of these cases into the consciousness of the working masses—today and for generations to come. Regular features of the Holiday Appeal are presentations by PDC representatives to union locals in cities across the country. As Cannon noted, "The victory of the class-war prisoners is possible only when they are inseparably united with the living labor movement." ***An injury to one is an injury to all!***

The 17 class-war prisoners described below receive monthly stipends from the PDC.

Mumia Abu-Jamal is a former Black Panther Party spokesman, a well-known supporter of the MOVE organization and an award-winning journalist known as "the voice of the voiceless." This past January, the U.S. Supreme Court took a big step toward the legal lynching of this innocent man. The Court vacated a March 2008 decision of the federal Third Circuit Court of Appeals that had upheld a 2001 decision by federal district court judge William Yohn overturning Mumia's death sentence. The high court in essence gave marching orders to the Third Circuit Court of Appeals to reinstate the death penalty. A hearing was held in Philadelphia on November 9.

This December marks the 29th anniversary of Mumia's arrest for a killing that the cops know he did not commit. Mumia was framed up for the 1981 killing of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner and sentenced to death explicitly for his political views. Mountains of evidence proving Mumia's innocence, including the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Faulkner, have been submitted to the courts. But to the racists in black robes, a court of law is no place for evidence of the innocence of this fighter for the oppressed.

While others plead with President Obama and his attorney general to "investigate" violations of Mumia's "civil rights," the PDC says that Mumia's fate cannot be left in the hands of the government of the capitalists. The racist rulers hate Mumia because they see in him the spectre of black revolt. The stakes are high and the situation is grim, but any real fight for Mumia's freedom must be based on a class-struggle opposition to the capitalist rulers, who have entombed this innocent black man for more than half his life.

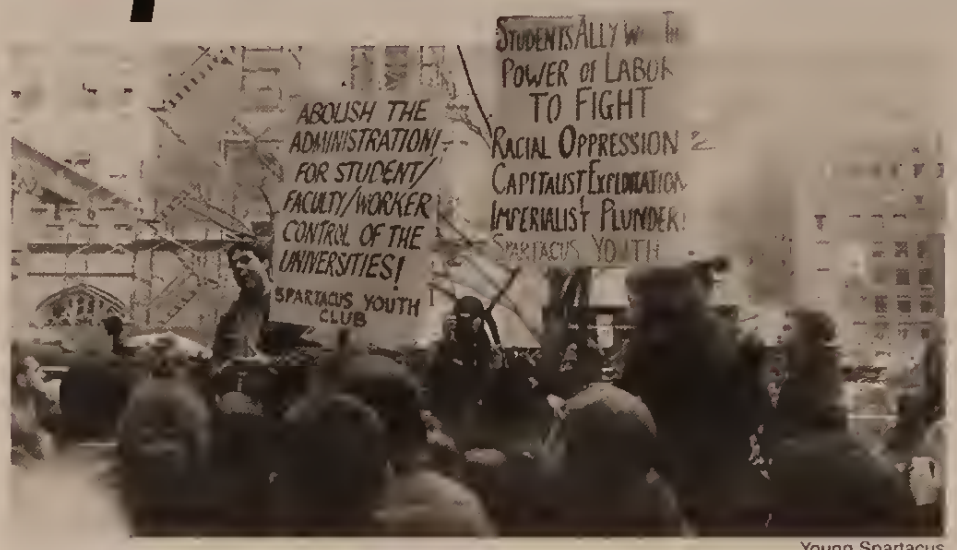
Leonard Peltier is an internationally renowned class-war prisoner. Peltier's incarceration for his activism in the American Indian Movement has come to symholize this country's racist repression of its native peoples, the survivors of centuries of genocidal oppression. Peltier's frame-up trial, for the 1975 deaths of two marauding FBI agents in what had become a war zone on the South Dakota Pine Ridge Reservation, shows what capitalist "justice" is all about. Although the

continued on page 11

Young Spartacus

Join the Spartacus Youth Clubs!

The Spartacus Youth Clubs intervene into social struggles armed with the revolutionary internationalist program of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. We work to mobilize youth in struggle as partisans of the working class, championing the liberation of black people, women and all the oppressed. The SYCs fight to win youth to the perspective of building the Leninist vanguard party that will lead the working class in socialist revolution, laying the basis for a world free of capitalist exploitation and imperialist slaughter.



Young Spartacus

SYC at March 4 demonstration in defense of public education at Hunter College, New York City.

What We Fight For

1 Mobilize students behind the social power of the multiracial working class! Picket lines mean don't cross! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programs! For union hiring halls! Down with union-busting "workfare" schemes! Jobs for all at union wages! Organize the unorganized! Unionize the South! Down with multi-tier wages, which pit younger and older workers against each other! Cops, prison guards, security guards out of the unions! Keep the bosses' government and courts out of the unions!

2 Black oppression is the bedrock of racist American capitalism. Finish the Civil War! For black liberation through socialist revolution! For mass labor/black mobilizations to stop the fascists and race-terrorists! No to gun control! For the right of armed self-defense! No reliance on the capitalist courts or politicians! Fascist terror is not a question of "free speech." Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

3 For free, quality, integrated public education for all! Nationalize the private universities! Down with the racist purge of higher education—defend affirmative action, no to tuition hikes! No to budget cuts! For an end to tracking! For open admissions, no tuition and a state-paid living stipend for all students! Abolish the administration—the universities should be run by those who work and study there! Down with police occupation of public schools! Cops off campus!

4 For women's liberation through socialist revolution! For mass, labor-backed mobilizations to defend abortion clinics! Down with parental consent laws and "squeal rules"! For free abortion on demand! For free, quality 24-hour childcare! For free, quality health care for all! Equal pay for equal work! Down with anti-gay laws! Down with reactionary age of consent laws! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! Government out of the bedroom! Down with the anti-sex witchhunt! Down with all laws against consensual activities, called "crimes without victims," like pornography, gambling, drug use, prostitution and "statutory rape"!

5 Down with racist anti-immigrant laws! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Organize foreign-born workers into the unions! No deportations! No to racist "English only" laws! Down with anti-Hispanic, anti-Arab, anti-Asian, anti-Semitic and all racist bigotry!

6 Down with the "war on terror," which is a war aimed at immigrants, labor, the left and minorities! Free all the detainees! Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free all class-war prisoners! There is no justice in the capitalist courts! Defend victims of racist cop terror and police frame-up! No illusions in civilian review boards or "community control" of the police! For labor mobilizations against racist cop terror! Down with the "war on drugs," a racist war by the ruling class against black and Hispanic youth! The capitalist state—at its core consisting of the cops, courts, prisons—is the executive committee of the ruling class, an instrument of organized violence by the capitalists against the workers and the oppressed. It must be smashed through workers revolution!

7 Defend separation of church and state! Defend science against superstition and mysticism! Keep religion out of the schools! No prayer in the schools! Down with the teaching of creationism! For the teaching of evolution! No government funding for religious, private or "charter" schools!

8 Defeat U.S. imperialism through workers revolution! U.S. and allied forces out of Iraq, Afghanistan now! Down with the neocolonial occupations! For class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers at home! No illusions in the UN—a den of imperialist thieves, their victims and their lackeys! All U.S./UN/NATO troops out of the Balkans, Haiti! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico! U.S. troops out of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean! U.S. imperialist butchers: hands off the world! No to the draft! Not one man, not one penny for the imperialist military! Drive ROTC, CIA and police recruiters off the campuses!

9 For international working-class solidarity! Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! Workers of the world, unite! For unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states of Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea against capitalist counterrevolution and imperialist attack! For workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats and establish regimes of workers democracy, based on the power of workers councils, and revolutionary internationalism!

10 Break with the racist, warmongering Democratic and Republican parties of capitalism! No support to any capitalist parties, including Greens! For a revolutionary, multiracial workers party that fights for socialist revolution! Look to the example of the heroic, Bolshevik-led workers of 1917 Russia! For new October Revolutions! For the international rule of the working class!

27 July 2010

The Spartacus Youth Clubs are the youth groups of the revolutionary Marxist Spartacist League/U.S., section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Indian Trotskyist...

(continued from page 2)

Bhutan tightened its laws about entry of foreigners and their employment and prohibited their permanent stay in Bhutan. Not only that, it expelled a lot of Nepali speaking people from Bhutan as illegal immigrants who moved to India and Nepal. These people now accommodated in refugee camps in India are called Bhupalis.

In Darjeeling too the Lepchas were the original inhabitants but as the Nepalis became a majority, they started an aggressive movement for a separate state of Gorkhaland by 1980. The ruling CPI(M) like other parties subscribing to Bengali chauvinism calls the demand as unconstitutional and separatist which is absurd, particularly after the creation of the states of Chattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttarakhand —states created by carving out certain parts of the states of Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh respectively. The demand of Gorkhaland led to sudden appearance of new outfits like JANACHETANA (people's consciousness), JANA JAGARAN (people's awakening), and BANGLA O' BANGABHASA BACHAO SAMITI (save Bengal and Bengali language) who brand the Nepalis in Darjeeling and adjacent areas as illegal immigrants and demand the cancellation of the Indo-Nepal Agreement of 1950. In turn the Nepalis call the Bengalis illegal immigrants from Bangladesh. Thus an inter ethnic tension and anti-Nepali hysteria prevails in North Bengal at present.

WV Map

A further complication has arisen from the fact that leaders of the Nepali speaking parties demand inclusion of areas like Tarai and Duars (sub Himalayan tracts) in Gorkhaland where the population is mixed and the Nepali speaking people do not constitute a majority. The tribal population has reacted against it by forming an organization called Adivasi Vikash Parishad (Tribal's Development Council). It is also challenging Bengali chauvinism by demanding Hindi medium schools and colleges, a long felt need in the region. None of the parties claiming to be left has proved capable of facing these challenges as their approach is narrow minded and determined by electoral considerations, not on principles.

Trotskyist movement in India was destroyed by impatience of leadership and get rich quick tactics. The parties they entered into were well experienced in entryism. They (the Stalinists and Social Democrats) had worked for not less than fourteen years in the Congress and recruited their cadres there and they were not going to permit the entrants freedom to work as a group inside their parties. The Indian Trotskyists ruined their base hopelessly as they allowed their trade unionists to enter rival organization which meant surrendering all they had gained to their class enemies beyond hope of recovery. They repeated the mistake again when RWP [Revolutionary Workers Party] merged with RCPI [Revolutionary Communist Party of India]. So at the risk of sounding dogmatic, I dare say patience and "no entryism" are going to be the first two guiding principles of Trotskyist movement in India. More later.

Revolutionary greetings,
Fraternally,
Upendranath Roy
West Bengal, India

Gay Oppression and the Suicide of Tyler Clementi

NEW YORK CITY—On September 22, 18-year-old Rutgers University student Tyler Clementi committed suicide by jumping from the George Washington Bridge. Earlier that week, his college roommate had secretly streamed video over the Internet of him making out with another man. Following Clementi's death, reports of suicides of gay youth around the country came trickling out in the press. The next month saw the kidnapping and torture of three young men in the Bronx because they were suspected of engaging in homosexual sex. These terrible events are not anomalies; they speak to the ongoing oppression of gays, and of all those who diverge from the deeply entrenched gender roles inherent to the institution of the family in capitalist society.

Homosexual youth are up to four times more likely than straight youth to attempt suicide. Almost two-thirds report feeling unsafe at school. The growth of religious backwardness and the reactionary "family values" campaigns pushed by both Democrats and Republicans have further intensified anti-gay bigotry and violence, at the same time that state-sponsored "abstinence only" campaigns and the rollback of abortion rights have aimed to repress every expression of young people's sexuality.

Confronted by the events of the last several months, everyone from the *New York Times*, the bourgeoisie's newspaper of record, to the reformist International Socialist Organization has responded with calls for anti-bullying measures. For public school and campus administrations, the capitalist rulers' watchdogs, anti-bullying policies are a pretext for further snooping into the private affairs of youth, who are already subject to anti-drug witchhunts. Black and minority students, who especially are branded as criminals by cops and security guards and subject to discriminatory "zero tolerance" policies in their schools, would be among the first targets.

We oppose school administrators having stronger disciplinary powers, and we also oppose "hate crime" legislation. Hate crime legislation strengthens the capitalist state's repressive powers while promoting the absurd idea that the state will defend the interests of those oppressed and exploited under capitalism. In practice, such laws have been used to persecute anarchist protesters and pro-Palestinian activists while gays, immigrants and black people continue to face cop and vigilante terror in the streets.

We seek to win youth to building a revolutionary workers party that will act as a champion of the oppressed against the barbarism of capitalist society. Only socialist revolution will open the way to an egalitarian, communist society where the institution of the family, the source of women's and gay oppression, can be replaced because its economic and social functions will be fulfilled by society as a whole.

We print below a Spartacus Youth Club speaker's remarks at the New York Spartacist League's October 9 forum, slightly edited for publication.

* * *

What I wanted to talk about is what, probably, you have been reading in the papers, this recent wave of attacks against gays in New York and the surrounding areas. There is the case of Tyler Clementi, the Rutgers student, a tragic suicide. There are also the cases of the brutalized gays in the Bronx that were on the front page of the *New York Times*, and the attack on a gay man at the landmark of the gay rights movement, Stonewall, in the Village.

It is a vital task of the workers revolutionary vanguard to fight for full democratic rights for gays. In the United States, which is one of the most politically backward advanced capitalist countries on Earth, we see an infestation of Puritanism and religious fundamentalism.

The monogamous family remains the legally enforced social model for the organization of private life in its most intimate aspects, such as love, sex, bearing and raising children. It is the central institution oppressing women, and anti-gay bigotry flows from the need to punish any "deviations" from this patriarchal model.

So what is our program? You can, of course, read more in the *Women and Revolution* pages of our newspaper, or come to one of our youth classes at City College this semester. To give you a snapshot of our program for women's liberation and for the complete end to this system of oppression, I would like to quote Leon Trotsky.

We had this in our article "For the Right of Gay Marriage...and Divorce" [*WV* No. 824, 16 April 2004]. Leon Trotsky wrote a response to the magazine *Liberty* in January 1933. They were asking him, "Is Bolshevism deliberately destroying the family?" This is Trotsky's answer:

> "If one understands by 'family' a compulsory union based on the marriage contract, the blessing of the church, property rights, and the single passport, then Bolshevism has destroyed this policed family from the roots up.
>
> "If one understands by 'family' the unbounded domination of parents over children, and absence of legal rights for the wife, then Bolshevism has, unfortunately, not yet completely destroyed this carry-over of society's old barbarism.
>
> "If one understands by 'family' ideal monogamy—not in the legal but in the actual sense—then the Bolsheviks could not destroy what never was nor is on earth, barring fortunate exceptions."■

M.N. Roy...

(continued from page 2)

notion of a revolutionary party simultaneously representing the class interests of workers and peasants, as we will see. The peasantry consists of petty-bourgeois layers; the poor peasants can be won to following the lead of the revolutionary proletariat, but such an outcome is by no means the only possibility. As an intermediate social layer, the peasantry can also support outright reactionary forces, or it can serve as a cover for the interests of the big bourgeoisie itself.

A major factor propelling Trotsky to found the International Left Opposition and later the Fourth International, which carried forward the struggle for the authentic internationalist program of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, was the betrayal of the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 by Stalin and his allies in the CI. At the core of Stalin's policy was looking to the Guomindang, the party of the Chinese bourgeoisie, as the leader of the Chinese national revolutionary struggle, and the complete liquidation of the young Chinese Communist Party (CCP) into the Guomindang. The "workers and peasants party" theory blossomed as the "bloc of four classes," as the Guomindang was dubbed.

Stalin made use of the opportunism and adventurism of his operatives in China, principally Mikhail Borodin and later M.N. Roy. (This of course does not excuse his making his minions scapegoats after the fact.) Thousands of Communists and pro-Communist workers paid with their lives for Stalin's criminal opportunism. In April 1927, Guomindang head Chiang Kai-shek, turning on his CP allies, carried out a bloody coup in Shanghai, murdering thousands of Communist cadres and trade unionists; the catastrophe was then repeated in other cities. To conceal the hideous results of his policy of liquidating the CCP into the Guomindang, Stalin launched a series of cynical ultraleft, adventurist uprisings in China that added greatly to the death toll of Communist comrades, pro-Communist workers and revolutionary peasants, completing the beheading of the Chinese proletariat.

History's verdict on the Chinese debacle was rendered by Trotsky in his 1928 critique, "The Draft Program of the Communist International: A Criticism of Fundamentals" (printed in *The Third International After Lenin*). In this crucial indictment of the Stalinized CI, Trotsky quoted from Lenin in 1909 concerning the Russian Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs): "The fundamental idea of their program was not at all that 'an alliance of the forces' of the proletariat and the peasantry is necessary, but that there is no ***class abyss*** between the former and the latter and that there is no need to draw a line of class demarcation between them, and that the social democratic idea of the petty bourgeois nature of the peasantry that distinguishes it from the proletariat is fundamentally false." Trotsky added:

> "In other words, the two-class workers' and peasants' party is the central idea of the Russian Narodniks [populists]. Only in the struggle against this idea could the party of the proletarian vanguard in peasant Russia develop. Lenin persistently and untiringly repeated in the epoch of the 1905 revolution that 'Our attitude towards the peasantry must be distrustful, we must ***organize separately from it***, be ready for a struggle against it, to the extent that the peasantry comes forward as a reactionary or anti-proletarian force'." [emphasis added by Trotsky]

Trotsky devoted several pages of the section of *Third International After Lenin* on "Summary and Perspectives of the Chinese Revolution" to the nature of the peasantry. Quoting from Lenin against the anti-Bolshevik idea of workers and peasants parties, he concludes: "This idea reappears in hundreds of Lenin's major and minor works. In 1908, he explained: 'The alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry must in no case be interpreted to mean a ***fusion of the different classes or parties*** of the proletariat and the peasantry'" (emphasis added by Trotsky).

Trotsky wrote in the same work: "In the West the idea of a workers' and peasants' party is simply ridiculous. In the East it is fatal. In China, India, and Japan this idea is mortally hostile not only to the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution but also to the most elementary independence of the proletarian vanguard. The workers' and peasants' party can only serve as a base, a screen, and a springboard for the bourgeoisie."

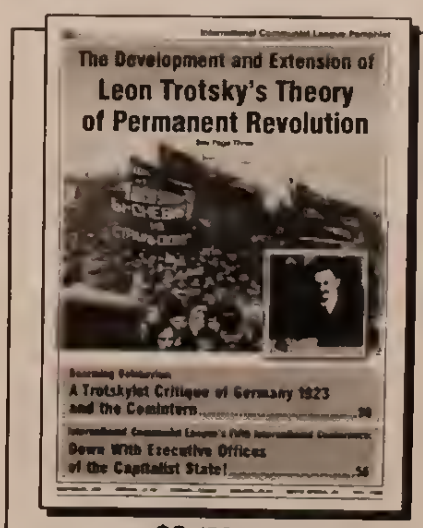
Summarizing Roy's role in the Indian communist movement, Trotsky wrote in "Who Is Leading the Comintern Today?" (September 1928):

> "It is doubtful if greater harm could be done to the Indian proletariat than was done by Zinoviev, Stalin, and Bukharin through the medium of Roy. In India, as in China, the work has been and is oriented almost totally toward bourgeois nationalism.... Through the medium of Roy, the leadership of the International is holding the stirrup for the future Indian Chiang Kai-sheks.... In India the catastrophe is being prepared just as methodically as it was in China. Roy has taken the Chinese example as a model."

In an article on "Trotskyism in India" in *Revolutionary History* (Winter 1988-89), Ervin fantasized, "Had Roy gone over to the Left Opposition, rather than to the Right, the whole story of Indian Trotskyism might have been quite different." Trotsky offered a rather different judgment on Roy, writing in his September 1928 essay: "It is not necessary to say that this national democrat, poisoned by an adulterated 'Marxism,' is an implacable foe of 'Trotskyism'."

M.N. Roy's most lasting contribution to "Communism" was his attempt to reconcile it with bourgeois nationalism. His "non-doctrinaire" approach to communist theory, so admired by many academic pseudo-Marxists today, consisted in pushing proletarian subordination to the bourgeoisie in the colonial world. As noted above, this was anything but a new approach, owing much to the Narodniks and SRs. Its results in China in 1925-27 were horrific and counterrevolutionary. And we also note, with the benefit of more hindsight than Lenin and Trotsky had, that the results of bourgeois nationalism in power in the former colonies in the last half of the 20th century and today have similarly been horrific and counterrevolutionary.

Throughout the Indian subcontinent, from Kashmir to Jaffna, the imperialist-dependent capitalist rulers have built upon the fratricidal divisions inherited from imperialism, promoting social backwardness of every kind and practicing state-sponsored communalist slaughter of minority peoples. Real national and social liberation of the working class and oppressed Third World masses cannot be accomplished under the rule of the neocolonial bourgeoisie, as Trotsky explained in putting forward the program of permanent revolution. The first condition for the proletariat being able to carry out its revolutionary role is the scrupulous safeguarding of its class independence from the bourgeoisie.■



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Bloody Sunday, 1972

AFP

Peress/Magnum

Derry, 30 January 1972: British soldier grabs Catholic protester (left); child wounded by soldier's rubber bullet is carried away (right).

The Defining Story of the British Army in Northern Ireland

We print below an article from *Workers Hammer* No. 211 (Summer 2010), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League. The article was written after British Conservative prime minister David Cameron, following the conclusion of a government inquiry, issued an official "apology" for the 1972 Bloody Sunday massacre. On January 30 of that year, British troops occupying Northern Ireland fired on protesters in the city of Derry demanding civil rights for the oppressed Catholic population. Twenty-six unarmed people were shot. Fourteen died.

The Bloody Sunday slaughter cast a sharp spotlight on the brutality of the British occupation force and became a rallying point for the civil rights movement for Catholic equality in Northern Ireland. Nearly 40 years later, the Catholic minority remains subjugated.

As our comrades underline, there can be no solution to the oppression of Catholics in Northern Ireland under capitalism. The existence of Northern Ireland is premised on Protestant domination of the Catholic minority. At the same time, the Irish nationalist program for reunifying the six counties of Northern Ireland with the Irish Catholic clericalist state would result in a reversal of the terms of oppression, leading to communalist slaughter and forced population transfers. While opposing all aspects of the national oppression of the Catholic minority, we recognize that the conflicting claims of Catholics and Protestants can he equitably resolved only within the political framework of proletarian class rule in the British Isles, in which the capitalists' divide-and-rule drive against the working class in the service of profit has been eliminated.

* * *

The relatives and supporters of the 14 civil rights marchers who were gunned down by the British Army on 30 January 1972 cheered when British prime minister David Cameron officially admitted on 15 June that the killings were "unjustified and unjustifiable." Cameron's speech revealed to the public the results of the twelve-year-long inquiry into Bloody Sunday by Lord Saville, which has been a bone of contention since it was established in 1998. For the oppressed Catholics of Northern Ireland, the Saville Inquiry represented the hope that the hated Widgery Report of 1972, which cast suspicion that some of the dead "had been firing weapons or handling bombs," would be removed from history. For the military top brass, the inquiry represented a potential threat that army personnel might actually face charges for killing with impunity.

When Saville's findings were revealed, the relatives felt vindicated, not least when they heard a British prime minister say that those who were slain on Bloody Sunday were innocent. At the same time, contrary to the orchestrated complaints about Saville by the military, the report did not recommend that a single soldier should be prosecuted and it carefully avoided describing the killings as "unlawful." Saville fell far short of the truth about Bloody Sunday, which was stated clearly by Derry coroner Hubert O'Neill at the time of the 1973 inquest: "It was sheer, bloody unadulterated murder."

"My brother was running away from the soldiers when he was shot," said Joe Duddy, speaking about Jackie Duddy who was shot from behind as he tried to escape from the paratroopers. The Widgery Report "destroyed our loved ones' good names," he added. "Today we clear them." Tony Doherty, whose father Patrick was shot as he tried to crawl to safety, addressed the thousands-strong crowd in Derry saying: "It can now be proclaimed to the world that the dead and the wounded of Bloody Sunday, civil rights marchers, one and all, were innocent, one and all, gunned down on their own streets by soldiers who had been given to believe that they could kill with perfect impunity" (*Guardian*, 16 June).

Heaping praise on the British Army for its "courage and professionalism in upholding democracy and the rule of law in Northern Ireland," Cameron sanctimoniously declared that "Bloody Sunday is not the defining story of the service the British Army gave in Northern Ireland from 1969-2007." This is a blatant attempt to bury the memory of British Army brutality in Northern Ireland once and for all. The theme about the need to "move on," to erase the memory of Bloody Sunday from history, is echoed *ad nauseam* in the British capitalist press. By portraying Bloody Sunday as an exceptional incident within an otherwise impeccable record, the Saville Report is being used to refurbish the credentials of the imperialist forces who today shoot-to-kill with impunity in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Announced by Tony Blair's Labour government as a prelude to the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, the Saville Inquiry was designed in part to give the Dublin government some credibility with the Northern Ireland Catholics whom it has long treated with disdain, including over Bloody Sunday. Bertie Ahern, who was Irish Taoiseach [the head of the government] at the time, spoke recently of the Bloody Sunday inquiry's centrality to the "peace" process. "I had to put a lot of pressure on Tony Blair. All the advice he was getting from securicrats was to not go into a full judicial inquiry," said Ahern, who added that the Dublin government had "a lot at stake in building up nationalist confidence that we would be able to work with the British government and work with Tony Blair" (*Guardian*, 15 June). Talking in Blair's other ear, David Trimble, then Unionist leader, warned in 1998 that if the inquiry moved "one millimetre" from the Widgery Report, there was a risk of soldiers facing charges "of manslaughter, if not murder." "I pointed out to Blair that we would see soldiers in the dock," said Trimble (*Guardian*, 10 June). Indeed the Saville Report, at 5,000 pages and a cost of £192 million, did not recommend putting any of the killers in the dock. Some soldiers may be charged...with perjury, for having made "knowingly untrue" statements to the inquiry (*Guardian*, 16 June). Seemingly a "crime" against the process itself is more serious in the eyes of the good Lord Saville than gunning down Catholic protesters.

Saville cleared Major General Ford, the commander of land forces in Northern Ireland in 1972, of responsibility for the deaths, saying he "neither knew nor should have known at any stage that his decision [to deploy the Parachute Regiment] would or was likely to result in soldiers firing unjustifiably on Bloody Sunday" (*Saville Report*, Volume III). Never mind that three weeks before Bloody Sunday Ford had advocated shooting "rioters" in Derry, or that on Bloody Sunday he was heard to say: "Go and get them and good luck" as the Paras entered the Catholic Bogside where the massacre took place. Saville concluded that Martin McGuinness, an adjutant in the IRA in Derry at the time, was "probably armed with a Thompson sub-machine gun" on the day, a claim which McGuinness says "has no foundation or substance." A glaring illustration of the "impartiality" of British justice is the case of Gerald Donaghy, who served a six-month sentence for throwing stones at the police in 1971. On Bloody Sunday, five weeks after his release, he was shot dead by the British Army, hut no one is likely to spend a day behind bars for his killing. The Saville Report upheld the army's

WORKERS HAMMER

Workers Hammer

Spartacist League/Britain contingent in 1981 London protest shortly after death of IRA prisoner and hunger striker Bobby Sands.

Britain: Hands Off Student Protesters!

LONDON, November 14—Britain's capitalist rulers are baying for blood after their vicious attacks on education met with sharp protest on the streets of London on November 10. In the largest demonstration so far against the Tory-Liberal Democrat government, more than 50,000 students, together with lecturers and others, marched against plans to nearly triple the upper limit on university tuition fees, to £9,000 [$14,500] a year beginning in 2012, while slashing university budgets by 40 percent.

During the march, a sizable group of protesters split off to rally at the headquarters of the Tory party at Millbank Tower. Some windows were smashed, then a couple hundred demonstrators briefly occupied the building before being ejected by police. Over 50 were arrested and released on bail, another 250 were searched and photographed to face possible charges, and hundreds more could be snared in the police dragnet. Outrageously, a protester who allegedly threw a fire extinguisher (that hit no one) may be charged with "attempted murder." The Spartacist League/Britain demands: *Defend the Millbank protesters! Drop all charges! No reprisals!*

Getty

November 10: Demonstrators try to gain entry to Conservative (Tory) Party headquarters in London in protest against government plans to triple tuition fees.

Immediately after the protest, Tory prime minister David Cameron, in chorus with Labour Party Members of Parliament and the bourgeois press, began to howl about the "violence" of the protesters who scuffed up Millbank Tower. To the press's anguished cries of "Why?", one protester quipped, "Tory HQ, property of the capitalist state, mate!" All the clamour about "violence" is rich coming from Cameron, and from Labour: tell it to the peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan who know the brutality of occupation by British and U.S. imperialist troops.

Ominously, the Metropolitan police are vowing to be better "prepared" next time. These are the same police who killed Ian Tomlinson during a bloody cop rampage against last year's G20 protest; who executed Brazilian electrician Jean Charles de Menezes on the London Tube in 2005 in the name of the racist "war on terror"; and who daily assault black and Asian youth using "stop and search" powers. The cops are at the core of the capitalist state—which also comprises the courts, prisons and military—the purpose of which is to maintain through violence the system of exploitation of the working class by the bourgeoisie.

The coalition government's massive budget cuts amount to an all-out assault on working people, the poor and elderly, as well as youth, on a breathtaking level. Members of David Cameron's cabinet—stuffed with some 18 millionaires and assorted Eton graduates—sneer that "benefit cheats" are draining the British economy and label single mothers on welfare as "scroungers." The unemployed are ordered to "get a job," even as the government announces cuts that will wipe out half a million public sector jobs and many more in the private sector. Railing against the "dependency culture" and calling it a "sin" to refuse any miserable job on offer, work and pensions secretary Iain Duncan Smith is hatching schemes to cut benefits for millions of people. The government is taking a budget axe to youth centres, social services, libraries, parks, the National Health Service, schools, programs for the elderly...anything that provides a lifeline to working people and the poor.

The student protest shows the depth of anger against Cameron's Tories and not least against Nick Clegg, leader of the Liberal Democrats, who pledged not to raise student fees during the election campaign. Chanting "Tory scum!" and "Nick Clegg, we know you, you're a f---ing Tory too!", reformist organisations such as the Socialist Workers Party seek to channel this anger into support for a Labour government, under newly elected leader Ed Miliband. What an inspiration! Labour; which before the general election promised cuts "deeper and tougher" than Margaret Thatcher's in the 1980s; which for 13 years carried out imperialist butchery abroad and union-busting and racist immigrant-bashing at home; and which in fact first brought in university tuition fees in 1998, and later tripled them.

Any capitalist government—whether Labour, Tory and/or Liberal Democrat—would try to gouge the working class to pay for the current economic crisis. What's needed is class struggle to defend the working class and poor against these attacks. The Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League, fights to build a multiethnic revolutionary workers party that will lead the struggle for socialist revolution to uproot the capitalist order and put in power a workers government.■

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claim that Donaghy was carrying a nail bomb when he was killed. This is contrary to reports by witnesses, including "soldier 138," a medical officer who pronounced Donaghy dead and conducted an examination of his body, that they saw nothing in his pockets. The armed forces are widely suspected of having planted the nail bomb which was visible in police photographs taken after Donaghy's death.

The Saville Inquiry has bolstered illusions in public inquiries, based on the myth that the armed forces of the capitalist state can be made accountable to the oppressed peoples and classes they maraud over. The capitalist state is an executive arm of the ruling class and cannot be made accountable to the working class and oppressed. It must be shattered in the course of workers revolution, led by a revolutionary workers party, and replaced with a new state power of the working class. Marxists understand that imperialist "democracy" is the velvet glove to disguise the mailed fist of capitalist class rule. Events such as Bloody Sunday are not some aberration, but part and parcel of the normal workings of the armed forces of the capitalist state.

Bernadette Devlin McAliskey, one of the leaders of the civil rights movement who was at the Bloody Sunday demonstration, noted that Saville let the British government off the hook, saying: "It is the British government, not their anonymous and brutalised soldiers of their alphabet army who should be in the dock, at the international court of justice at The Hague. If Saville has closed that route to truth and justice, the British government will consider it worth every penny" (guardian.co.uk, 15 June). The idea that the capitalist rulers can be held to account is bogus, but not inconsistent for Devlin McAliskey who supported the British Army being sent to Northern Ireland in 1969. In a 1970 interview she gave to *Workers Press*, paper of the Socialist Labour League, she is quoted as saying:

> "The saving of lives, the necessity of saving lives in that circumstance, was brought around by the whole system and therefore you cannot simply say take the troops out of Ulster. Because the people will say you cannot take the troops out because if you do the people will die."
>
> —*Workers Press*, 18 June 1970

Eamonn McCann, another leading figure in the civil rights movement in Derry, and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) supported the Labour government of the day sending in British troops. Shamelessly peddling illusions in British imperialism as a force for "peace," the SWP declared: "The breathing space provided by the presence of British troops is short but vital. Those who call for the immediate withdrawal of the troops before the men behind the barricades can defend themselves are inviting a pogrom which will hit first and hardest at socialists" (*Socialist Worker*, 11 September 1969).

Bloody Sunday *is* the defining story of the British Army in Northern Ireland, but it is hardly a unique atrocity. According to the Pat Finucane Centre, more than 150 killings by the army between 1970 and 1973 were not even investigated by the police. During the period 9-11 August 1971, when the British introduced internment without trial, paratroopers shot dead eleven civilians in Belfast's Ballymurphy area in a remarkably similar operation to Bloody Sunday. Relatives of those killed are now calling for an "independent international inquiry" into the shootings. But no one should be fooled into having illusions in public inquiries. Tony Blair introduced the 2005 Public Inquiries Act specifically to curtail what can be made public in any "public" inquiry. This legislation was a kick in the teeth to the family of Pat Finucane, a Belfast Catholic lawyer who defended Bobby Sands and other Irish hunger strikers, who was gunned down in front of his family by the [pro-British] Loyalist UDA [Ulster Defence Association] in 1989. Finucane was targeted by Brian Nelson, an agent of the British Army and intelligence chief of the UDA, which means that his case would be a devastating exposure of British imperialist collusion with the Loyalist paramilitary killers.

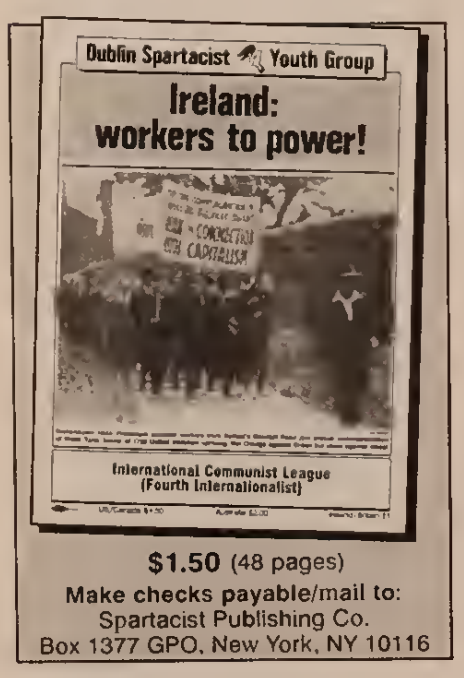
The 1998 Good Friday Agreement gave a facelift to the sectarian Orange state of Northern Ireland, allowing for the entry of Sinn Fein into Stormont [the historic seat of Orange government] and making some cosmetic changes to policing. But the ***fundamental*** nature of the Orange state as it was created by the British at the time of partition, based on the subjugation of the oppressed Catholics, remains unchanged. The "peace process" brought no peace to those who try to expose to the outside world the British state's murderous role. In 1999, Rosemary Nelson, a prominent Catholic lawyer who reported to the UN that she received death threats from the RUC [Royal Ulster Constabulary], was murdered by a Loyalist bomb. In June 2007 Northern Ireland's Public Prosecution Service announced that no police officer or soldier will face prosecution for the murder of Pat Finucane.

British "democracy" was never much in evidence in Ireland, which was a testing ground for state repression to be used elsewhere. The treatment routinely dished out to Irish Catholics, who were once indiscriminately targeted as "terrorist suspects," is now being applied to Britain's Muslims and to any perceived opponent of British imperialism. Internment without trial and the shoot-to-kill policy, practised for years on the streets of Northern Ireland, have been brought to the streets of London as seen in the brutal execution of Brazilian immigrant Jean Charles de Menezes who was labelled a "terrorism suspect" in July 2005.

An internal report entitled "Operation Banner—An Analysis of Military Operations in Northern Ireland" issued by the British Army in August 2007, when its military campaign in Northern Ireland officially ended, boasts that this was "one of the very few ever brought to a successful conclusion by the armed forces of a developed nation against an irregular force." The report's foreword is written by none other than General Sir Michael Jackson, former head of the British Army during the Iraq invasion and former chief of the general staff. Jackson was in Derry on Bloody Sunday and as adjutant to the Parachute Regiment he has responsibility for false reporting of what happened—his handwritten "shot list" indicated that those killed included "nail bombers, gunmen or snipers" (*Guardian*, 16 June).

Despite the much-trumpeted end of military operations there, the British Army maintains troops and bases in Northern Ireland, as back up to the 9,000-strong heavily armed Police Service of Northern Ireland/Royal Ulster Constabulary (PSNI/RUC). We have uniquely warned that, within the framework of capitalism, there is no democratic solution to the oppression of the Catholic minority, in a situation where they are geographically interpenetrated with the Protestants, who are a distinct community.

We demand all British troops and bases out of Northern Ireland, Afghanistan and Iraq! Together with the U.S. military, the British Army is one of the most powerful forces for terrorism in the world. There is no way to end the oppression, brutality and subjugation perpetrated by the British Army short of a workers revolution to overthrow this brutal ruling class which has committed atrocities against its colonial subjects for centuries. We seek to build revolutionary parties dedicated to mobilising the proletariat on both sides of the Irish border, and both sides of the Irish Sea, in a struggle for a workers republic in Ireland, part of a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles.■



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Immigration...

(continued from page 1)

We can expect new rounds of attacks on workers, blacks and immigrants, on abortion and gay rights. An early signal is the attack on Social Security proposed by a bipartisan deficit reduction commission appointed by Obama. Republicans are already saying they will try to further clamp down on union organizing. As for the Democrats, newly elected New York governor Andrew Cuomo and California's Jerry Brown have made clear that they're gunning for public employees unions and their pension benefits to rescue state budgets.

While the elections marked a victory for the right wing of the American bourgeois political spectrum, bourgeois elections offer only a distorted reflection of what is going on in society, where there is enormous anger at the base. The question is how to fight the attacks on workers' livelihoods, on civil liberties and the rights of the oppressed.

The "answer" provided by the social democrats of the ISO is: Hail to the Chief. Lance Selfa writes in *Socialist Worker* (November 2010) that "a Republican majority in one or both houses of Congress can do plenty of damage. But as long as the Democrats hold the presidency, the damage can be limited." The ISO makes starkly clear its faith in the top executive office of the blood-soaked capitalist-imperialist state power, as administered by the Democrats.

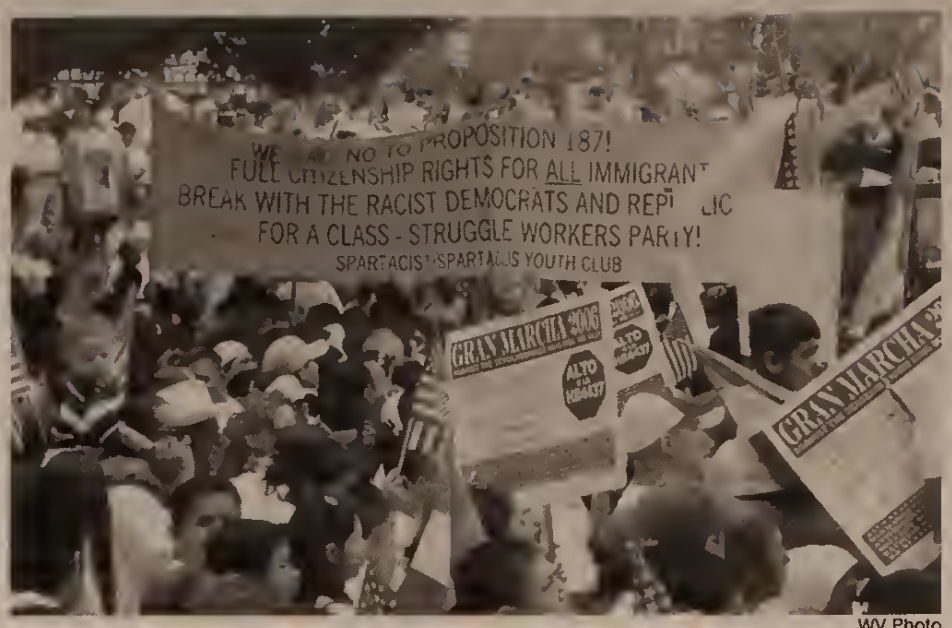
We have a different answer. As we wrote in "Electoral Circuses, No Bread: For a Class-Struggle Workers Party!" (*WV* No. 967, 22 October): "There is a desperate need for *class struggle*, placing a revived labor movement at the head of the ghetto and barrio masses in a fight against the common capitalist class enemy. Such struggle needs a political expression: a workers party organized independently of, and in opposition to, the Democratic and Republican parties of capital." This was the theme of a presentation by Joe Sol at an October 9 New York Spartacist League forum, which we print below, edited for publication.

* * *

The capitalist system is based on the brutal exploitation of all labor, with the ruling class inflaming racial and ethnic hostilities to keep the working class divided and thus ensure a greater extraction of profit. Just as immigrant workers are brought in during economic boom times to provide a pool of low-wage labor, the current rise in anti-immigrant attacks worldwide is exacerbated by the global economic crisis and its attendant soaring unemployment.

The legacy of slavery means that black people have been forcibly segregated to the bottom of this deeply racist capitalist society. The question of black freedom is key to the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist order, which cannot survive without its fundamental prop: the brutal, racist oppression of blacks. Black, white, immigrant and other minority workers need a multiracial revolutionary workers party, not just for defense against the rapacious capitalists but for class struggle whose aim is the destruction of the capitalist system of exploitation, poverty and war through socialist revolution here as part of the fight for socialist revolution internationally. Crucial to the building of such a party in the U.S. is the understanding of the unbreakable connection between the fight for labor's emancipation, the defense of immigrant rights and the key cause which must be the axis of a revolution in the U.S., the fight for black freedom.

The pro-capitalist trade-union leadership and its reformist leftist hangers-on stand opposed to the fight for socialist revolution. Through words and deeds, they seek to turn the inevitable struggles of workers forced to defend their very existence back into support for the capitalist system through the agency of the Democratic Party—a party of racism and war in which the trade-union bureaucrats play an integral role. The Democratic Party is a party of and for the capitalist masters that cannot be pressured to represent the interests of the class it seeks to oppress, the working class.



WV Photo

Immigrant rights demonstration in Los Angeles, March 2006.

Exploitation and Anti-Immigrant Repression

It was a hot summer in Europe. There has been a wave of huge demonstrations and one-day general strikes, defensive struggles against attempts by the capitalist governments in the midst of the world economic crisis to slash the wages of public sector workers, gut pensions and jack up sales and other taxes. The latest round of European strikes and demonstrations took place on September 29, with protests of hundreds of thousands of workers and strikes across 13 countries. But these struggles are used by the workers' social-democratic leaderships to blow off steam. What is necessary is a fight for workers power.

Obama, with Homeland Security Secretary Napolitano, signs $600 million bill for increased militarization of Mexican border, August 13. Right: April 2009 procession at Tijuana border wall commemorating more than 5,000 who died trying to cross into U.S.

Getty

AP

And just as is happening here, in Europe the bourgeoisies push anti-immigrant reaction and scapegoat and throw out immigrants. Roma, better known as Gypsies, are suffering a torrent of racist abuse in France, while in Italy African immigrants are being targeted by the racist cops for beatings and expulsion. All this anti-immigrant bigotry is not just a particular expression of backwardness but serves a purpose for the various national bourgeoisies—the exploiting class. It enhances their ability to divide and rule over the working class.

This is seen as well in the recent swell of anti-Muslim bigotry, which is underpinned by the capitalist rulers' continual "war on terror." Like the "war on drugs" and "war on crime," this phony "war" serves to intensify racist capitalist state repression. It also provides a pretext for imperialist marauding in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. From the mass murder of imperialist war to economic devastation on a world scale, the capitalist rulers have nothing to offer the workers and oppressed of the world but calls for further sacrifice.

The destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92 represented a world-historic defeat for the international proletariat, resulting in a general retrogression of working-class consciousness. The proletariat today does not view its struggles through the prism of the fight for socialism. But it is an imperialist triumphalist lie that the capitalist system of exploitation is the only economic system possible in the modern world. The October Revolution of 1917, a proletarian revolution led by Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party, translated Marxism into deeds. It showed that the working class can take power and wield it through democratically elected workers soviets. The internationalist early Soviet Union became a beacon to the working class and oppressed worldwide.

As Marxists, we in the International Communist League know that the capitalist system creates its own gravediggers, the proletariat—the working class that produces the wealth of society with its own hands and has the power to shut down capitalist production. The capitalist class—the bourgeoisie—expropriates the wealth of society through its ownership, as private property, of the means of production. In a competition of each against all, individual capitalists must constantly seek to maximize their profit simply to stay afloat. They must drive up the rate of exploitation of the workers through speedup, wage cuts, slashing benefits, what have you. Of course, the worker wants the opposite: better pay, more free time, safety, health benefits, retirement, etc. The interests of the worker and the interests of the capitalist are directly counterposed.

The capitalists profit by paying the workers only a fraction of the total value of the product they create, so the workers in any given country can only afford to buy a fraction of what they produce. The capitalists of the advanced industrial countries must constantly look for new markets internationally to exploit. Thus you have imperialism, marked by the export of capital, and its continual crises of overproduction in the midst of generalized poverty. Lenin identified imperialism as "the highest stage of capitalism," which, in its death agony, is defined by a handful of imperialist powers, armed to the teeth, locked in a never-ending struggle for the redivision and control of the world's markets, natural resources and labor to exploit.

The contradictions inherent in the capitalist system point directly to the need for workers rule of society and the elimination of private property in production—for the smashing of the capitalist state and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The vital tool needed for that task is the revolutionary workers party. A revolutionary must be, as Lenin explained in *What Is To Be Done?*, "*the tribune of the people*, who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalize all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth *before all* his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for *all* and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat."

Here in the U.S., there is now a great deal of disillusionment among workers and other oppressed sectors of society with Democrat Barack Obama, the first black president, largely because illusions were so high after eight years of the Bush administration. Skin color notwithstanding, Obama simply is what he is: the overseer of the most deadly and exploitative imperialist power on the planet.

Obama now plans to deploy 1,200

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National Guardsmen to the Mexican border, add 1,000 Border Patrol agents to the 20,000 already there, increase the border security budget by $500 million and deploy more drone aircraft. No less than the Republicans, the Democratic Party is a party of and for the capitalist class, with the difference that the Democrats cynically pose as "friends" of labor, blacks and immigrants and shed crocodile tears over the consequences of the anti-working-class measures that they themselves impose.

Immigrant workers, especially from Mexico and Central America, often bring militant traditions of class struggle to the U.S. They are not only a catalyst for class and other social struggle but also a human bridge linking the struggles of working people on both sides of the border. The Spartacist League demands full citizenship rights for all immigrants. We stand for full equality of all languages in all spheres of public life and defend bilingual education against "English only" bigots. We stand unalterably opposed to the bourgeoisie's anti-immigrant laws and regulations.

Against the capitalists' attempts to use undocumented, low-wage immigrant workers as a club against the trade unions, we seek to mobilize the labor movement to fight deportations and immigration raids through class-struggle means and to organize such workers into the unions with full rights and protections. It is particularly important to combat anti-immigrant chauvinism in the working class and especially among black workers, while the immigrant-derived proletariat must grasp that anti-black racism remains the bedrock of American capitalism.

Capitalist Divide-and-Rule

José Osvaldo Sucuzhañay, a 31-year-old Ecuadorian immigrant and father of two, was walking with his brother Rómel through the streets of Bushwick in Brooklyn. As they walked arm in arm, four black men pulled up alongside of them, got out of their SUV and hurled anti-gay and anti-Latino epithets at the brothers before launching a murderous attack. Rómel managed to escape, but they surrounded José, beat him and crushed his skull with a baseball bat. He died six days later in the hospital. Ecuadorian immigrant Marcelo Lucero was fatally stabbed near the Patchogue, Long Island, train station by a gang of racist teens who reportedly drove around searching for a Latino to attack. One of the teens was Puerto Rican. There has also been a spate of attacks mostly by young black men against Mexican immigrants in the Port Richmond section of Staten Island, which has seen the number of Mexican residents climb sharply over the past two decades.

You cannot struggle to change this hideous reality if you deny its existence. In the 19th century, railroad baron Jay Gould once boasted: "I can hire one half of the working class to kill the other half." So these incidents are not an aberration but are a brutal expression of the murderous logic of racial divisions in society. And historically, the ultimate victims of racist violence in America have always been blacks.

Many black workers feel resentment toward Latinos, seeing yet another immigrant group which, in a generation or two, manages to climb the ladder and "pass over" them, so to speak, while they remain at the bottom. It is important to recognize that there is a lot of truth in this statement. Being a white Hispanic and a U.S. citizen in this racist and chauvinist country opens up a lot of possibilities that one's immigrant parents, as well as blacks and black Latinos, just do not have. On the other side of the issue, anti-black racism among layers of workers in the U.S. is real, it's a fact. Anti-black racism among immigrant Latinos is a contradiction that goes completely against their own historical interests as oppressed and exploited workers, in the same way that anti-immigrant chauvinism runs completely counter to the historical interests of black and white workers.

It is in the vital interest of all workers to unite in common struggle. It is necessary to combat the false consciousness that the black and Latino petty-bourgeois misleadership peddles—that the other worker is the enemy; that blacks will never fight for immigrant rights; that immigrants are nothing but scabs who want to steal black workers' jobs. Combating such false consciousness is an important task of a revolutionary workers party whose goal is to seize power from the capitalists with the active support of the majority of the working class.

The Republic Windows sit-down strike in Chicago in December 2008 was a modest example of black and immigrant workers unified in struggle against the bosses. The factory occupation began after the Republic bosses gave three days' notice that the plant would be shut down, throwing its 260 union employees out of work. The union exposed the fact that Republic's owners were moving the plant's equipment and setting up a non-union shop in Iowa. A Mexican woman worker was key in sparking the sit-down strike.

After a courageous six-day plant sit-in that captured the attention of the nation, these largely immigrant and black workers won their demands, forcing the bosses and their bankers to fork over $1.75 million in severance pay and benefits. However, the workers' small victory was largely attenuated by the United Electrical (UE) workers union bureaucrats, who not only mobilized the UE ranks to hustle votes for Obama but also embraced one Democrat after another during the sit-in, pushing the lie that the Democrats are friends of labor and completely gutting the understanding of the need for independent class struggle.

State Archives of Florida

Above: Passengers in segregated railroad depot in Jacksonville, Florida, wait to catch trains to North, 1921. Below: Tenements in Chicago's segregated "Black Belt," 1941.

Library of Congress

While standing atop organizations whose purpose is the defense of the workers' economic interests, the union bureaucrats act as the political police over the working class in the interests of the racist bosses. Their bankrupt, class-collaborationist program means the acceptance of the right of the filthy rich capitalists to exploit the workers as wage slaves. Presiding over givebacks and defeats, they have demoralized and demobilized the American working class, preaching the lie that the Democrats, the government and the courts are on the side of workers. In fact, the union tops spent a whopping ***$450 million*** of union members' dues money on the 2008 bourgeois elections.

These labor traitors *accept* the government's campaign against undocumented immigrants, seeking only to tinker with its methods of repression. Embracing national chauvinism, the union tops sacrifice the union membership on the altar of the bosses' profitability versus their foreign competitors. A glaring example was the October 2 AFL-CIO/NAACP-organized "One Nation" demo in Washington, D.C., whose purpose was to hustle votes for the Democrats while promoting "national unity" with the racist bosses. The United Auto Workers just made a deal in one plant slashing new-hire wages to the bone in order to allow GM to compete with foreign makers of subcompact cars, dividing the workers against themselves.

The protectionist poison pushed by the bureaucrats amounts to blaming the loss of jobs in the U.S. on our class brothers and sisters abroad rather than the American capitalists. Trade protectionism is anathema to the international working-class solidarity that is needed to advance the struggle against the bosses in each country, including the U.S.

A particular target of the United Steelworkers tops' protectionism is the Chinese deformed workers state. They have been recently on a campaign to get the Obama administration to implement trade sanctions against the growing Chinese green manufacturing sector. The anti-Communist Steelworkers union leadership serves the counterrevolutionary interests of the U.S. imperialist rulers.

While capitalist property has made huge inroads over the last three decades of "market reforms," nationalized property remains the core of the Chinese economy. The imperialists seek nothing less than the restoration of capitalist rule in China. It is vital for the international proletariat to stand for the unconditional military defense of China and the other remaining deformed workers states—Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam—against imperialism and domestic counterrevolution. It is the task of the proletariat of those countries to carry out a political revolution to sweep out their nationalist Stalinist misrulers, who preach accommodation to the world capitalist order, and establish regimes based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

Black Oppression and American Capitalism

During the current wave of anti-immigrant reaction, some politicians have posed the repeal of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. The 14th Amendment granted citizenship to freed black slaves and to all children born in the States, including the children of immigrants, thereby pegging the question of citizenship to birth on U.S. soil. It took a Civil War, with 200,000 black troops helping to turn the tide for the Union, for black slaves to win freedom and citizenship. While the American ruling class has always used ethnic and racial divisions to keep working people and the oppressed divided, the truth has never been clearer that immigrant rights and black freedom either go forward hand in hand or they fall back separately.

From slavery to convict labor, from the chain gang to the assembly line, American capitalism has been built upon the lash-scarred backs of black labor. Any organization that claims a revolutionary

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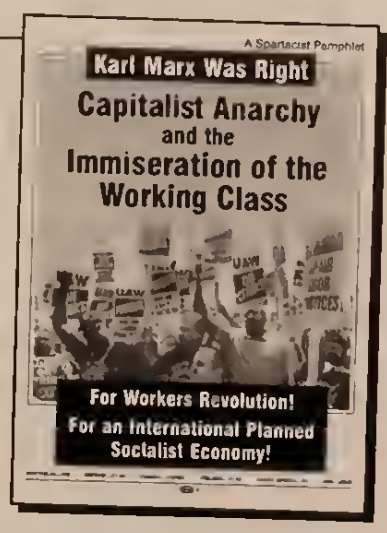

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Immigration...

(continued from page 9)

perspective for the United States must confront the ***special oppression*** of black people—their forced segregation at the bottom of capitalist society as a race-color caste and the poisonous racism that divides the working class and cripples its struggles. With the mass migration of blacks from the South to the Northern cities, particularly beginning in the early 20th century, the earlier nativist hostilities against immigrant workers were supplanted by anti-black racism. The color bar, a fundamental dividing line in American capitalist society, is a key prop for obscuring the irreconcilable class divide between labor and capital.

Counterposed to liberal integrationism, which holds that black equality can be achieved within the capitalist system of ruthless labor exploitation and racial subjugation, we advocate ***revolutionary integrationism***: the understanding that black freedom requires smashing the capitalist system and constructing an egalitarian socialist society. This perspective is also counterposed to petty-bourgeois black nationalism, an ideology of defeatism that would deny blacks their birthright: ***the wealth and culture their labor has played a decisive role in creating.*** As Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky told his American supporters in 1939: "We must say to the conscious elements of the Negroes that they are convoked by the historic development to become a vanguard of the working class."

Our program is counterposed to "people of color" politics, which views race as the primary dividing line in capitalist society as opposed to the class division between the capitalists and the workers. There is an implicit presumption that all non-white people have common interests against all whites. White workers and bosses are supposedly united in "white skin privilege." Obviously, the heads of some white workers are filled with the racist rulers' lies of white superiority and black inferiority. This has considerably weakened the whole working class to the extent that the U.S. is the only industrialized society that does not have a mass party that even in a deformed way represents the interests of the working class.

Falkenberg/L.A. Times

Los Angeles, September 6: Protest against LAPD killing of Guatemalan immigrant Manuel Jamines.

Over the past few decades, white workers along with black, Latino and Asian workers have lost jobs and hard-earned benefits. Thus, white workers do not benefit from the oppression of minorities. White workers have no material stake in the perpetuation of this incredibly unequal society, whose white ruling class enjoys unparalleled riches coming at all workers' expense. We fight to win the multiracial working class to a program and perspective of class independence from and class struggle against a common enemy, the capitalist exploiters—i.e., to the struggle for socialist revolution to abolish capitalism.

Obama Takes Aim at Immigrants

In the 16 years since NAFTA was signed, the Mexican countryside has been devastated, including through the removal of protection against U.S.-produced corn and beans, the mainstays of the diet of the poor and the key staples grown by poor peasants. Thus, the mass immigration over the Mexican border that has occurred is a direct consequence of U.S. imperialism's free-trade rape of Mexico.

The anti-immigrant hysteria of the bourgeois parties is sharply rising as actual immigration is falling. Fewer workers are now undertaking the dangerous passage across the border because there are many fewer jobs. Between 2007 and 2009, the number of undocumented immigrants dropped by nearly a million. Mass deportations and the scapegoating of immigrants by the Democratic Party Obama administration in the current economic crisis have also had their devastating effect. Today, the latest figures released show that the Obama administration has broken records, deporting some 390,000 in 2009. They have at least tripled the rate of deportations of the Bush years.

The Obama administration pushes employers to fire workers whose Social Security numbers do not match government records. To force the issue, Obama expanded many of the anti-immigrant programs of the Bush White House, such as the E-Verify database and I-9 audits of employer records. Mass terminations of immigrant workers have followed the audits at one industrial plant after another, from 254 workers, mostly women, at food processor Overhill Farms in May 2009 to about 1,500 at clothing maker American Apparel last September, both in the Los Angeles area. We demand: No deportations! Down with the raids!

The Democrats' so-called "immigration reform" plans include the institution of a national biometric identity card for everyone in the United States. This will increase the police-state powers and repressive apparatus of the capitalist state in the context of the so-called "war on terror." The Obama administration has also vastly expanded a program called in Orwellian language the "Secure Communities" initiative, whose purpose is to help local police forces throughout the country identify and deport so-called "criminal immigrants." The program, which has been responsible for the deportation of nearly 47,000 immigrants over the past year and a half, slanderously tars immigrants as criminals, while in fact the vast majority of immigrants identified and deported under this program committed no crimes.

So Obama and the Democrats scold racist pigs like Republican governor Jan Brewer for passing the Arizona apartheid-style anti-immigrant pass law SB1070, while in essence doing the same thing and more effectively, using the racist cops to harass anyone who doesn't look "American" and to sweep up immigrant workers, break up families and deport immigrants en masse.

There have been some immigrant student protests in support of the "Dream Act," which is supposed to provide a conditional path to citizenship for some undocumented immigrant youth who complete two years of college or a tour of duty in the military. Of the tens of thousands of undocumented immigrant youth who graduate from high school each year but do not have the money or other resources to go to college, a large majority would then end up in the military. We oppose the Dream Act, which would be a boon for military recruiters, roping immigrants in as cannon fodder for U.S. imperialism.

Capitalists Make Workers Pay

To build a revolutionary party we have to politically defeat the opportunist currents within the labor movement. Reformist "socialist" organizations that seek to pressure the Democrats are an obstacle to the independent mobilization of the working class in its own interest.

For example, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) in an August 2 *Socialist Worker* article, "Standing Up to a Racist Law," reports that "the administration has refused to take tougher measures to make sure the racial profiling law is defeated." Later on they gleefully report that "protesters called on the president to end the criminalization of migrant communities with 'the stroke of a pen'."

Mumia...

(continued from page 12)

crucial issues brought by Mumia: the racist jury-rigging in the initial trial; the prosecutor's prejudicial summary argument that Mumia would have "appeal after appeal" so the jury need not worry about sentencing him to death; Mumia's grossly biased appeal hearings were held before the notorious "hanging judge" Albert Sabo. Known as the "king of death row," Sabo also presided over Mumia's original trial, when he was overheard saying he would help the prosecutors "fry the n----r." It may take months for the Third Circuit to announce its decision on the death sentence, which will then likely be appealed to the Supreme Court.

From day one, the courts, backed by Democratic and Republican politicians, have colluded with the police and prosecutors against Mumia. At every level, the courts have refused to consider mountains of evidence of Mumia's innocence, not least the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981. While supporting the use of every legal means available to Mumia, we place no trust in the courts of the class enemy. As we have long stressed, what is needed is mass protest centered on the social power of the working class.

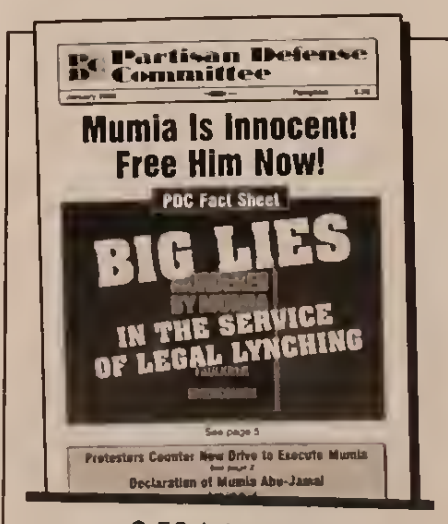
In the latest phase of the campaign to legally lynch Mumia, the Philadelphia F.O.P. has endorsed a movie, *The Barrel of a Gun*, directed by black Republican Tigre Hill. The lying premise of this slick, sick documentary is that Mumia, as a supporter of the Black Panthers in his youth and a journalist championing MOVE's cause, was predisposed toward killing cops. Along with the Centurion motorcycle gang, police packed the September 21 Philadelphia premiere of this hit piece, breaking into cries of "Kill him!" and "Fry him!" according to anti-Mumia blogger Conor Corcoran.

In an effort to counter Hill's smear job, a film titled *Justice on Trial: The Case of Mumia Abu-Jamal* opened the same night in Philadelphia. Produced by Baruch College professor Johanna Fernandez, the film interviews J. Patrick O'Connor, author of *The Framing of Mumia Abu-Jamal*, and features much evidence of Mumia's innocence. However, the film steers clear of the most compelling evidence, not least Mumia's statement about what happened the night of Faulkner's killing and Arnold Beverly's confession that he and another man were hired to kill Faulkner, who had become a problem for the mob and corrupt cops (see the July 2006 Partisan Defense Committee pamphlet, *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal*).

Many of Mumia's liberal and even leftist supporters reject the Beverly confession, with its clear picture of organized, murderous cop corruption, as incredible. In fact, this is standard fare for the capitalists' thugs in blue, not least in Philadelphia. Since March last year, 15 Philly cops have been arrested on corruption charges, six were nabbed in three drug investigations and two are charged with murder, the latest arrest coming only days before the Third Circuit hearing.

In their legal persecution of Mumia, a defiant opponent of racist state terror, the capitalist rulers are sending a message to anyone who might struggle against their system of exploitation and oppression. Outside the court hearing, supporters of the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee carried signs reading: "There Is No Justice in the Capitalist Courts! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!" and "Obama's 'War on Terror'=Imperialist Occupation Abroad, Political Repression at Home." In contrast, a Workers World/International Action Center contingent combined their standard call for a "new trial" for Mumia with appeals to U.S. Commander-in-Chief Barack Obama and his top cop, Eric Holder, to speak out against the death penalty and "investigate" Mumia's case. Preaching reliance on the forces of racist capitalist "law and order," the reformists are an obstacle to militant struggle in defense of Mumia.

Mumia's cause must be a clarion call for all opponents of the racist death penalty, which in the U.S. is the legacy of chattel slavery. If linked to a revived labor movement, the fight for Mumia's freedom could strike a powerful blow against the system of state terror employed by the capitalists against the working class, black people and all the oppressed. In polemicizing against the reformists' appeals to Obama and Holder, we wrote in *WV* No. 941 (28 August 2009): "The stakes are high and the situation is grim, but any real fight for Mumia's freedom must be based on a class-struggle opposition to the capitalist rulers, who have entombed this innocent black man in prison for more than half his life."■



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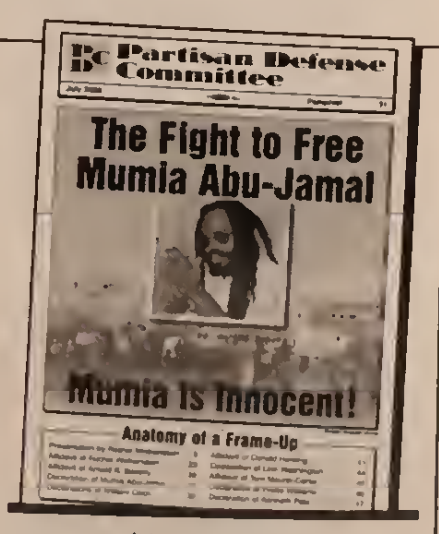

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Similarly the last line in a statement released by the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) this summer was, "Instead of mass deportations, the Obama administration should support comprehensive immigration reform that gives millions of super-exploited immigrant workers full legal rights." No, that is not going to happen! The ISO and the PSL, through their words and especially their actions, peddle illusions that the Democrats can lead a kinder and gentler capitalism.

They imply that the bourgeois state, which in our Marxist view is an instrument for the suppression of the working class in the interests of the capitalist class, can somehow be reformed to serve our interests. No, it can't. Composed at its core of armed bodies of men—cops, *la migra*, the army, courts and prisons—the capitalist state must be smashed by the revolutionary workers, and a workers state established.

In opposition to the capitalists and their reformist agents, Trotsky argued in the Transitional Program (1938): "If capitalism is incapable of satisfying the demands inevitably arising from the calamities generated by itself, then let it perish." Over the past three and a half decades, the rich have fabulously increased their wealth, mainly by slashing benefits and driving down wages. Pay for production and other non-supervisory workers—80 percent of the private workforce—is today 9 percent lower in real terms than it was in 1973. During that same period, output per worker increased by more than 80 percent.

So, the American capitalists have enormously ratcheted up the rate of exploitation by extracting increased output from employed workers, including through forced overtime. Also, there have been mass layoffs that have vastly increased the numbers of unemployed and underemployed. Marx called them the "industrial reserve army," whose existence serves to restrain what he ironically referred to as workers' "pretensions" to demand higher wages.

Alongside growing unemployment, large numbers of black and Latino youth are condemned by the racist capitalist state to rising rates of incarceration and murderous police repression. Of the 2.3 million men, women and children behind bars, 70 percent are black or Latino. The recent killing by NY police thugs of Luis Soto and attempted killing of Angel Alvarez in a hail of 50 police bullets are by no means an aberration. In Los Angeles a few weeks ago, Manuel Jamines, a Mayan from Guatemala, was killed in the street by the vicious LAPD. We should not forget Sean Bell and Amadou Diallo, as well as the countless other victims of police terror. These killings are part of the systematic police violence against the black and Latino populations under racist American capitalism.

In spite of the trade-union tops' class collaborationism, there have been multiracial labor struggles in this country that point the way forward. Divisions among black, white and immigrant workers break down in the course of class struggle. The potential to fight and win was shown in the campaign for union recognition by the workers at Smithfield's Tar Heel, North Carolina, pork processing plant. When the Smithfield bosses tried to fire 75 "no match" workers in November 2006, a two-day walkout that included black and white workers as well as Latinos forced the company to rehire everyone. However, by the time workers won their union in late 2008, workplace raids by immigration agents had driven out a significant number of immigrant workers. The battle at Smithfield underlines the need for a mass, militant union organizing drive throughout the country and particularly in the open shop South.

The situation we face underlines the need to throw out the pro-capitalist sellouts and replace them with a class-struggle leadership of labor as part of the fight to build a revolutionary workers party. Labor needs a leadership standing on the principle of class independence which would fight not only for immediate economic demands but on broader social issues, a leadership which seeks to mobilize the power of workers independent of the bosses' parties and the capitalist state. Defense of immigrant rights against the government's "war on terror," defense of black and Latino youth against racist cop terror, opposition to the "war on drugs" and the murderous occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan—these are some of the causes that a class-struggle union leadership would take up, putting the massive power of the working class on the side of all the oppressed.

It is the task of the revolutionary party as the tribune of the people to mobilize labor and the oppressed in struggle against all forms of capitalist oppression. Our model remains that of the Bolshevik Party which led the 1917 Russian October Revolution. The rule of the capitalists and landowners was replaced by that of the working class, which inspired workers and oppressed peoples internationally. In spite of Stalinist degeneration, which in the end threw open the doors to capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92, the Soviet Union demonstrated the capacity of a collectivized, planned economy to provide work, education, health care and decent conditions of life for all.

We carry forward the battle for the emancipating principles of the Bolshevik Revolution. The proletariat must struggle—for the survival of humanity—to take power in its own name under the banner of the revolutionary party. Through international socialist revolution and the establishment of an internationally planned socialist society, the slogan "Asian, Latino, black and white, workers of the world unite" will become a permanent reality.■

Bonl and Liveright

Workers at Petrograd's Putilov metal works, a bastion of soviet power during 1917 October Revolution. Banner at left proclaims: "Long Live the Third International!"

Oakland...

(continued from page 12)

obtain 'justice' from the courts of the capitalist class enemy." The capitalist rulers are hardly going to punish their own police guard dogs for the crimes they commit in the capitalists' service. And even if one cop were charged and imprisoned, it wouldn't stop police terror.

The burning anger of the ghettos and barrios against the rampaging cops must be linked to the social power of the multiracial working class mobilized in *class-struggle* opposition to the capitalist state—its cops, courts and military—and all of its political parties. There will be no end to police terror short of the destruction of this entire system of exploitation and oppression, which the cops "serve and protect." Our purpose is to build the revolutionary workers party that can lead the fight for a socialist America. Only then will there be justice for working people and all the oppressed.

We reprint below a November 10 letter by the Partisan Defense Committee to the Alameda County District Attorney protesting the mass arrests in Oakland following the sentencing of Mehserle.

* * *

The Partisan Defense Committee condemns the massive police assault on the November 5 Oakland march in solidarity with Oscar Grant by an army of cops in riot gear from a slew of different police agencies. The marchers were expressing their justified outrage at the token sentence for Johannes Mehserle, the BART cop who killed Oscar Grant in cold blood on New Year's Day 2009. The November 5 police assault was a repetition of what happened following the July 8 slap-on-the-wrist "involuntary manslaughter" verdict against Mehserle.

In the media, the cops claimed that they expected protesters to march as planned to deFremery Park, but the police told demonstrators that any march to the park would be blocked. The march instead went east and, according to witnesses, the cops—who heavily outnumbered the marchers—eventually formed a wall on 6th Avenue near East 17th Street, declared the demonstration an "unlawful assembly" and the entire block a "crime scene," and gave protesters no chance to disperse before they moved in. The cops threw many demonstrators to the ground and arrested 152, almost the entire march. As of November 8, six were still being held. At least one protester, Stephanie McGarrah, has been vindictively charged with felony arson. We demand their immediate release and the dropping of all charges against everyone arrested!

This assault on protesters in Oakland is just the latest brutal attempt to silence and intimidate those who would protest rampant, racist police terror. Only three days later, on Monday, November 8, the Oakland police killed another unarmed black man, Derrick Jones. Free all the Oscar Grant protesters! Drop all the charges!■

Holiday Appeal...

(continued from page 3)

lead government attorney has admitted, "We can't prove who shot those agents," and the courts have acknowledged blatant prosecutorial misconduct, the 66-year-old Peltier is still locked away. Last year, the U.S. Parole Commission again turned down Peltier's parole request and shockingly declared they would not reconsider his case for another 15 years.

Eight MOVE members—**Chuck Africa, Michael Africa, Debbie Africa, Janet Africa, Janine Africa, Delbert Africa, Eddie Africa** and **Phil Africa**—are in their 33rd year of prison. They were sentenced to 30-100 years after the 8 August 1978 siege of their Philadelphia home by over 600 heavily armed cops, having been falsely convicted of killing a police officer who died in the cops' own cross fire. In 1985, eleven of their MOVE family members, including five children, were massacred by Philly cops. This year, again, after more than three decades of unjust incarceration, nearly all of these innocent prisoners had parole hearings, but none were released.

Lynne Stewart is a radical lawyer incarcerated for zealously defending her client, a blind Egyptian cleric imprisoned for an alleged plot to blow up New York City landmarks in the early 1990s. On July 15 she was resentenced to ten years—more than quadrupling her original sentence—in a loud affirmation by the Obama administration that there will be no let-up in the massive attack on democratic rights under the "war on terror." Stewart, now 71 years old and suffering from breast cancer, is known for her defense of Black Panthers, radical leftists and others reviled by the capitalist state.

Jaan Laaman and **Thomas Manning** are the two remaining anti-imperialist activists known as the Ohio 7 still in prison, convicted for their roles in a radical group that took credit for bank "expropriations" and bombings of symbols of U.S. imperialism, such as military and corporate offices, in the late 1970s and '80s. Before their arrests in 1984 and 1985, the Ohio 7 were targets of massive manhunts. Their children were kidnapped at gunpoint by the Feds.

The Ohio 7's politics were once shared by thousands of radicals during the Vietnam antiwar movement and by New Leftists who wrote off the possibility of winning the working class to a revolutionary program and saw themselves as an auxiliary of Third World liberation movements. But, like the Weathermen before them, the Ohio 7 were spurned by the "respectable" left. From a proletarian standpoint, the actions of these leftist activists against imperialism and racist injustice are not crimes. They should not have served a day in prison.

Ed Poindexter and **Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa** are former Black Panther supporters and leaders of the Omaha, Nebraska, National Committee to Combat Fascism. They were victims of the FBI's deadly COINTELPRO operation under which 38 Black Panther Party members were killed and hundreds more imprisoned on frame-up charges. Poindexter and Mondo were railroaded to prison and sentenced to life for a 1970 explosion that killed a cop, and they have now served more than 40 years in jail. Nebraska courts have repeatedly denied Poindexter and Mondo new trials despite the fact that a crucial piece of evidence excluded from the original trial, a 911 audiotape long-suppressed by the FBI, proved that testimony of the state's key witness was perjured.

Hugo Pinell is the last of the San Quentin 6 still in prison. He was a militant anti-racist leader of prison rights organizing along with George Jackson, his comrade and mentor, who was gunned down by prison guards in 1971. Despite numerous letters of support and no disciplinary write-ups for over 28 years, Pinell was again denied parole last year. Now in his 60s, Pinell continues to serve a life sentence at the notorious Pelican Bay Security Housing Unit in California.

Jamal Hart, Mumia's son, was sentenced in 1998 to 15½ years without parole on bogus firearms possession charges. Hart was targeted for his prominent activism in the campaign to free his father. Although Hart was initially charged under Pennsylvania law, which would have meant a probationary sentence, Clinton's Justice Department intervened to have Hart thrown into prison under federal law. The U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals has turned down Hart's *habeas corpus* petition, and he has faced myriad bureaucratic obstacles and racist targeting throughout his incarceration.

Contribute now! All proceeds from the Holiday Appeals will go to the Class-War Prisoners Stipend Fund. This is not charity but an elementary act of solidarity with those imprisoned for their opposition to racist capitalism and imperialist depredations. Send your contributions to: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013; (212) 406-4252.■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Mumia Abu-Jamal Is Innocent! Free Him Now!

Federal Appeals Court: D.A. Demands Mumia's Execution

In the latest threat to the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal, on November 9 the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia heard oral arguments on whether or not to reinstate the death penalty for this class-war prisoner. A prize-winning journalist and supporter of the Philadelphia MOVE organization, Mumia was railroaded to death row in 1982 on false charges of killing police officer Daniel Faulkner. To secure a death sentence, prosecutors painted a lying portrait of Mumia as a committed "cop killer" from the time he was a 15-year-old Black Panther Party spokesman.

As hundreds rallied for Mumia outside the courthouse, scores of cops and Feds under the watch of the Department of Homeland Security put the area under tight security. Inside the courtroom was a large contingent from the Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.). Along with the press, supporters of Mumia entering the hearing were subjected to a canine unit sniffing their bags and bodies, treated as potential "terrorists."

WV Photo

November 9 Philadelphia protest outside court hearing.

At issue in the Third Circuit hearing were the jury instructions during the sentencing phase of Mumia's 1982 trial. In 2001, federal judge William Yohn, while upholding every aspect of Mumia's frame-up conviction, overturned the death sentence. Yohn found the sentence to be unconstitutional under the precedent of the *Mills v. Maryland* decision because the sentencing form and jury instructions did not allow jurors to freely consider the mitigating circumstances weighing against a death sentence.

Yohn's ruling had been upheld by the Third Circuit Court of Appeals. But last January the U.S. Supreme Court vacated the Third Circuit decision, all but ordering the reinstatement of Mumia's death sentence. The Court cited its earlier decision reinstating the death sentence for neo-Nazi Frank Spisak, whose sentence had also been overturned due to improper jury instructions. As we wrote at the time in "Supreme Court of Death Rules Against Mumia Abu-Jamal" (*WV* No. 951, 29 January): "Spisak is a sociopath who admitted to killing his victims and made no secret of his admiration for Adolf Hitler. Mumia has always maintained his innocence and won acclaim as the 'voice of the voiceless' for his powerful commentaries. The Court is consciously manipulating abhorrence of the fascist Spisak's crimes to set a precedent for the legal murder of Mumia, a man whose 'crime' was to stand up to the racist capitalist rulers."

Just days before the current hearing, Robert Bryan, who had been Mumia's main lawyer for seven years, was fired. Bryan would not honor Mumia's request that Widener University law professor Judith Ritter, who had argued the specific question of jury instructions and mitigating circumstances before, be his sole spokesman at the hearing. Outrageously, in his motion to the court withdrawing from the case, Bryan asserted he had been "threatened by those in the 'movement' claiming to oppose execution of the client," treacherously adding his voice to the slanders by the police and their press agents who brand Mumia's supporters as criminals.

The three-judge panel maintained an appearance of impartiality, asking probing questions of prosecutor Hugh J. Burns Jr. It should be noted that in May 2007, the same panel had appeared favorable to Mumia before ruling against him on

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Oscar Grant's Killer Gets Slap on Wrist, Protesters Get Thrown in Jail

Oakland Cops Gun Down Another Unarmed Black Man

Mario Hodge

Derrick Jones

The killing of Oscar Grant, a young black apprentice butcher, by Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) cop Johannes Mehserle on New Year's Day 2009 was literally a shot heard around the world. Video images recorded by horrified passengers on the platform of the Fruitvale BART stop in East Oakland showed Mehserle as he stood over Grant, methodically drew his Sig Sauer P226 semiautomatic and fired into Grant's back, as another cop held him face down with his hands behind his back.

On November 5, Mehserle got the minimum sentence of two years, less time served, for this coldblooded execution. Declaring that the evidence was "simply overwhelming" that Mehserle had mistaken his gun, weighing over two and a half pounds, for a taser weighing less than a pound, Los Angeles County Superior Court judge Robert Perry wrote off the killing as an "accident." He also charged that Oscar Grant was coresponsible for his own death, retailing the cops' allegation that Grant was involved in a fight on the train. Arguing "this is not a case about race," the judge sneeringly dismissed as ill-informed the hundreds of letters appealing for justice from black people and others in Oakland, who are all too familiar with racist cop terror. As he stood outside the Los Angeles courthouse, where Mehserle's trial had been moved and conducted before a jury that included not one black person, Grant's uncle Cephus Johnson powerfully indicted the judge's ruling as but another example of this "racist, criminal justice system."

That night, following a protest rally in downtown Oakland, the cops told protesters that their planned march to a West Oakland park would be blocked by police barricades. When the protesters instead began to march toward the Fruitvale BART stop where Grant had been shot to death, they were trapped by an army of cops. With an armed personnel carrier on the ground and police helicopters buzzing overhead, riot-equipped cops rounded up and arrested 152 people.

Three days later, two Oakland city cops gunned down another unarmed black man, Derrick Jones, a 37-year-old barber in East Oakland and father of a two-year-old girl. Claiming that Jones was fleeing the scene of a reported domestic disturbance, the cops said they shot him several times through the chest because he was allegedly reaching for his waistband. One is reminded of the case of black African immigrant Amadou Diallo who in 1999 was cut down in a hail of bullets by New York City cops for reaching for his wallet. "Fleeing while black" is another "crime" punishable by death at the hands of the Oakland Police Department (OPD). In 2008, the cops killed Jodie "Mack" Woodfox, shooting him in the back as he "fled." The year before, 20-year-old Gary King Jr. was also shot in the back in broad daylight by an Oakland cop who claimed that King was reaching into his waistband as he held up his pants trying to flee an OPD posse. Derrick Jones is the third person to have lost his life at the hands of the OPD this year.

At a November 11 protest that began at Jones' barber shop and marched to the Fruitvale BART station, a multiracial crowd of 100 chanted, "Oscar Grant, D.D. Jones! We won't let them kill our own!" Speaking to the protesters, Cephus Johnson pointed to the two-year sentence for Mehserle as a license for cops to kill black people. This license is granted by the capitalist rulers, whom the police serve as an occupying army in the inner cities, as anti-union strikebreakers and as the fist to be brought down to repress social protest.

Hundreds mobilized for an October 23 protest in Oakland, initiated by International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10, to demand "Jail Killer Cops!" The unionists and others who came out that day reflected widespread anger over rampant cop terror. But, as we underlined in "There Is No Justice in the Capitalist Courts!" (*WV* No. 968, 5 November), the outrage over the slap-on-the-wrist verdict for Mehserle was seized upon by left-talking union misleaders to "try to lull the working class into believing that they can

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WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 970

3 December 2010

Dublin Government Launches Savage Attack on Working People

Ireland Ravaged by European Economic Crisis

Reuters

Dublin: More than 100,000 marched on November 27 to protest government austerity measures attached to financial bailout scheme.

The following article was written for Workers Vanguard *by our comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain.*

Faced with a dramatic financial crisis that threatens to engulf other European countries, Ireland has been plunged into an economic nightmare. With Irish banks exposed to massive "toxic" debts, the Dublin government was compelled to negotiate a bailout that is somewhere in the region of 85 billion euros [$113 billion] from the European Union (EU) emergency bailout fund. Even before the terms of the bank rescue plan had been agreed by the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Irish government announced a brutal austerity plan to cut €15 billion out of the (already slashed) budget.

The National Recovery Plan drawn up by Fianna Fail party Taoiseach (prime minister) Brian Cowen amounts to the harshest attack on the living standards of the working people in the Irish state's history. Backed by the Green Party, Cowen's coalition partner, the plan includes the loss of an estimated 25,000 public sector jobs, vastly increased taxes and student fees as well as further cuts in welfare spending, public sector pay and a vindictive €1-per-hour reduction in the minimum wage. The budget is scheduled for approval by the Dail (parliament) in early December, followed by a general election in January 2011, if the government doesn't fall before then.

Nonetheless, Dublin's ruthless budget did little to calm financial markets, and the massive sell-off of government debt continues, driving the government's borrowing costs sky-high. Ireland's crisis comes barely six months after the whopping €110 billion EU bailout of Greece;

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Down With Imperialist Provocations Against North Korea!

NOVEMBER 30—In a calculated provocation directed against both North Korea and China, the U.S. has dispatched the nuclear aircraft carrier USS *George Washington* along with other warships for a joint exercise with its South Korean junior partners in the Yellow Sea. This brazen display of imperialist military force comes less than a week after a South Korean naval exercise prompted an exchange of artillery fire in nearby waters off North Korea's coast. North Korea's shelling of the garrison island of Yeonpyeong resulted in the deaths of four South Koreans, including two civilians. U.S. president Barack Obama responded by openly threatening North Korea, declaring its regime to be "a serious and ongoing threat that has to be dealt with."

It is in the vital interest of the proletariat internationally to defend North Korea, a bureaucratically deformed workers state, against U.S. imperialism and the South Korean capitalist rulers. It is the imperialists and their lackeys who are an ongoing, deadly threat to Asia's working people. U.S. imperialism carried out the atomic incineration of 200,000 people in the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. U.S. imperialism went on to slaughter some three million Koreans in the 1950-53 Korean War and another three million Vietnamese in the 1960s and '70s in failed efforts to crush social revolutions. Among the crimes of Japanese imperialism was its brutal 40-year colonial occupation of Korea, which ended with Japan's defeat in World War II. In the aftermath of the war, the northern part of the Korean peninsula was liberated from capitalist rule through a social revolution carried out under the protection of Soviet troops.

In addition to its military provocations, the U.S. is demanding that the UN tighten economic sanctions, attempting to starve North Korea into submission. For its part, the Japanese government has strengthened coast guard monitoring in the Sea of Japan and increased the number of spy flights in the area. Treacherously adding their voices to the war cries against North Korea are Japan's Social Democratic and Communist parties, whose parliamentary deputies voted for a resolution calling to "strengthen collaboration with South Korea and the U.S." and to consider further sanctions against Pyongyang. In South Korea, where right-wing legislators demanded aggressive action against the North, including air strikes, the government dumped its defense minister and the military issued new, less restrictive guidelines on how to "respond" to North Korea.

A Pentagon official has hinted that the U.S.-South Korean exercises might well take place within 200 nautical miles of China's coast—a zone that

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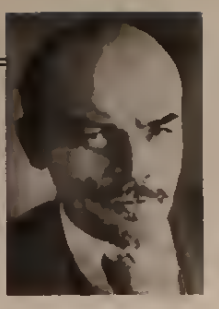
TROTSKY



LENIN

John Reed on Imperialist "Aid"

Radical American journalist John Reed was won to Bolshevism while reporting on the 1917 Russian Revolution in Petrograd. His classic *Ten Days That Shook the World* is a vivid eyewitness account of the insurrectionary days of the October Revolution. After his return from Russia, Reed was instrumental in the founding of the American Communist movement. As a delegate from the U.S. and as a member of the Executive Committee of the Third (Communist) International, he attended the First Congress of the Peoples of the East, held in September 1920 in Baku, capital of Soviet Azerbaijan. The Congress was convened to advance the revolutionary struggles of the exploited and the oppressed in the colonial and semicolonial world under the banner of Marxism and with the aid of the Soviet workers and those in the imperialist countries.

We print below a speech (undelivered due to time constraints) that Reed prepared for the Baku Congress warning against illusions in the American rulers' promises of aid. At the time, the Bolshevik government was fighting a bloody civil war against counterrevolutionary forces backed by an imperialist blockade and an invasion by the armies of 14 capitalist states, including the U.S. Reed, stricken with typhus, died in Moscow soon after he returned from Baku.

Reed's speech was originally published as an appendix to the Russian edition of the Baku Congress proceedings. The translation below was by Brian Pearce and was printed in *Baku: Congress of the Peoples of the East* (New Park, 1977).

* * *

I represent here the revolutionary workers of one of the great imperialist powers, the United States of America, which exploits and oppresses the peoples of the colonies.

You, the peoples of the East, the peoples of Asia, have not yet experienced for yourselves the rule of America. You know and hate the British, French and Italian imperialists, and probably you think that "free America" will govern better, will liberate the peoples of the colonies, will feed and defend them.

No. The workers and peasants of the Philippines, the peoples of Central America and the islands of the Caribbean, they know what it means to live under the rule of "free America."

Take, for example, the peoples of the Philippines. In 1898 the Filipinos rebelled against the cruel colonial government of Spain, and the Americans helped them. But after the Spaniards had been driven out the Americans did not want to go away.

Then the Filipinos rose against the Americans, and this time the "liberators" started to kill them, their wives and children: they tortured them and eventually conquered them. They seized their land and forced them to work and make profits for American capitalists.

The Americans have promised the Filipinos independence. Soon an independent Filipino republic will be proclaimed. But this does not mean that the American capitalists will leave or that the Filipinos will not continue to work to make profits for them. The American capitalists have given the Filipino leaders a share of their profits—they have given them government jobs, land and money—they have created a Filipino capitalist class which also lives on the profits created by the workers—and in whose interest it is to keep the Filipinos in slavery.

This has also happened in Cuba, which was freed from Spanish rule with the help of the Americans. It is now an independent Republic. But American millionaire trusts own all the sugar plantations, apart from some small tracts which they have let the Cuban capitalists have: the latter also administer the country. And the moment that the workers of Cuba try to elect a government which is not in the interests of the American capitalists, the United States of America sends soldiers into Cuba to compel the people to vote for their oppressors.

Or let us take the example of the republics of Haiti and San Domingo, where the peoples won freedom a century ago. Since this island was fertile and the people living on it could be put to use by the American capitalists, the government of the U.S. sent soldiers and sailors there on the pretext of maintaining order and smashed these two republics, setting up in their place a military dictatorship worse than the British tyrants.

Progress

John Reed (seated, third from right) with delegates at 1920 Baku Congress of the Peoples of the East.

Mexico is another rich country which is close to the USA. In Mexico live a backward people who were enslaved for centuries, first by the Spaniards and then by foreign capitalists. There, after many years of civil war, the people formed their own government, not a proletarian government but a democratic one, which wanted to keep the wealth of Mexico for the Mexicans and tax the foreign capitalists. The American capitalists did not concern themselves with sending bread to the hungry Mexicans. No, they initiated a counter-revolution in Mexico, in which Madero, the first revolutionary President, was killed. Then, after a three-year struggle, the revolutionary regime was restored, with Carranza as President. The American capitalists made another counter-revolution and killed Carranza, establishing once more a government friendly to themselves.

In North America itself there are ten million Negroes who possess neither political or civil rights, despite the fact that by law they are equal citizens. With the purpose of distracting the attention of the American workers from the capitalists, their exploiters, the latter stir up hatred against the Negroes, provoking war between the white and black races. The Negroes, whom they lawlessly burn alive, are beginning to see that their only hope lies in armed resistance to the white bandits.

At the present time the American capitalists are addressing friendly words to the peoples of the East, with a promise of aid and food. This applies especially to Armenia. Millions of dollars have been collected by the American millionaires in order to send bread to the starving Armenians. And many Armenians are now looking for help to Uncle Sam.

These same American capitalists incite the American workers and farmers against each other: they starve and exploit the peoples of Cuba and the Philippines, they savagely kill and burn alive American Negroes, and in America itself American workers are obliged to work under frightful conditions, receiving low wages for a long work-day. When they are exhausted they are thrown out on to the street, where they die of hunger.

The same gentleman who is now in charge of bringing aid to the starving Armenians, Mr. Cleveland Dodge, who writes emotional articles about how the Turks have driven the Armenians into the

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 970 **3 December 2010**

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All Imperialist Occupiers Out Now!

Haiti: Cholera Epidemic and Imperialist Oppression

Once again the impoverished black population of Haiti faces devastation. Nine months after January's catastrophic earthquake killed some 250,000 people and left another two million homeless, an outbreak of cholera originating in the Artibonite region has swept this country of ten million people. By November 24, five weeks after the first diagnosis, the United Nations counted 2,000 dead. Seventy thousand Haitians have been infected so far, with forecasts of up to 400,000 more cases over the next six months. Every day the papers feature another tragic story: a mother cradling her infant's lifeless body; a teenager carrying his grandmother for miles in hope of reaching a clinic or hospital in time; the mass graves that are dotting Haiti's landscape.

January's earthquake was a natural disaster, but the death toll and devastation were man-made, products of imperialist depredation that could be seen in the shoddily built buildings in the capital Port-au-Prince that collapsed like houses of cards. Cholera is *not* a natural disaster but a disease of poverty that can be stopped by applying the most basic public health measures. But more than a century of imperialist rape, plunder and brutal repression, continuing to this day under UN occupation, has left the Haiti population defenseless before this disease.

Cholera is a prime example of diseases of the poor. Characterized by acute diarrhea and vomiting, cholera is caused by bacteria that lodge in the intestines and is spread by the contamination of water supplies by human feces. Controlling sewage and making water supplies safe can prevent this scourge. Timely replacement of fluids and salts lost through diarrhea by oral rehydration solution—a simple, and cheap, mixture of sugar and salts—will prevent death for over 99 percent of cholera patients. Purification of water through the use of chlorine will also stop its spread. But in the impoverished slums of Third World countries, there is no sanitary public water supply, and untreated sewage is simply dumped into streams. Particularly at risk are children. Around the world, waterborne diseases yearly claim the lives of 1.6 million children under the age of five.

Ten months after the earthquake, 1.5 million Haitians are still homeless, living in tent camps where rainfall leaves them wading through a swamp of mud and feces. The disease is spreading especially rapidly in urban slums, such as Port-au-Prince's Cité Soleil. Even before January's earthquake, just 17 percent of Haitians had adequate sanitation, while nearly one out of every two Haitians had no regular access to drinking water. Haiti ranked dead last out of 147 countries in the World Water Council's 2002 Water Poverty Index, a measure of sanitation and water quality.

Some hotels and private homes may have their own septic systems, but that waste also often gets dumped in canals and drainage ditches, which double as sewers. These are often clogged with garbage and animal carcasses, which cause floods that spread infected water. In a country with an unemployment rate before the earthquake as high as 80 percent and with more than half the population living on less than one dollar a day, some Port-au-Prince residents dive into these "canals" to unclog them, aware that they are being exposed to life-threatening disease but desperate for their miserable monthly pay of $112 (if the bosses ever pay them).

AP

November 18 protest in Port-au-Prince against UN's MINUSTAH occupation force. Sign reads: "Minustah and Cholera Are Twins."

Haiti's unspeakable poverty is the direct product of racist vengeance and imperialist ravages. For 200 years, the Haitian masses have been paying in blood for the revolution carried out under Toussaint L'Ouverture against the French colonial slavocracy. Culminating in the first independent black state established in the modern era, the Haitian Revolution inspired slave revolts across the Americas and met with a frenzy of racist hostility from both France and the then-slaveowning U.S. In return for recognition by France, in 1825 Haiti was compelled to agree to compensate the former slaveowners 150 million francs ($20 billion at today's prices), a debt service that consumed around 80 percent of Haiti's budget and was only finally paid off in 1947. Until last year, Haiti had been forced to pay the imperialist bloodsuckers another $1 million a week to pay off a debt of $1.54 billion, mostly left over from the murderously corrupt Duvalier regime that took power in the 1950s.

With consummate imperial arrogance, the *New York Times* (20 November) laid the blame for the cholera epidemic on its victims, "since, as in syphilis's case, they are careless about whom they cavort with, and with cholera, they must lack good sanitation for it to spread." Left unsaid was that between 2001 and 2004, the U.S. government blocked $54 million in Inter-American Development Bank loans to rebuild urban water systems in Haiti, a country that lacks even one sewage plant. That act of imperialist cruelty was part of Washington's efforts to undermine the regime of bourgeois populist president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was overthrown in a U.S.-backed 2004 coup that brought in the UN's MINUSTAH occupation force.

Following last January's earthquake, the U.S. imperialists cried Hollywood tears. While former presidents Bill Clinton and G.W. Bush joined hands on a national TV campaign to raise money for Haiti, Barack Obama dispatched 20,000 combat troops in the guise of a "relief effort" and ordered a naval blockade to prevent Haitians from fleeing to the U.S. Carried out under a "humanitarian" cover, U.S. imperialism's re-occupation of Haiti aimed to secure military control and to reinforce the battered UN occupation force. The White House also sought to demonstrate American imperialist domination over the Caribbean, posing a particular threat to the Cuban deformed workers state. U.S. military authorities who took command of the Port-au-Prince airport prevented the World Food Program from landing cargos of food, medicine and water for two days, diverting their flights so that the U.S. could land troops and equipment and save Americans. We demand that all UN troops, and any remaining U.S. forces, get out now!

Since then, conditions have progressively worsened, accompanied by rising anger at the occupation forces. In May, MINUSTAH troops brutally suppressed a Port-au-Prince student protest against the occupation. One month later, 10,000 peasants protested against the U.S. agribusiness giant Monsanto, which had donated 475 tons of maize. The peasants reasonably feared that this was a ploy to force them to buy new seeds from Monsanto each year at prices they could not afford. By the time Hurricane Tomas approached in early November, there had been no reconstruction and no plans to protect the population—although the Pentagon did ready a helicopter carrier and a brigade of Marines for another possible occupation. The rains came and went without major damage. But the homeless remain homeless, the unemployed are still unemployed, and the starving are still starving, while the billions pledged for relief remain in hermetically sealed coffers.

It was no surprise that protests against MINUSTAH broke out in October after evidence emerged that the bacteria causing the cholera outbreak was similar to a South Asian strain and may have been introduced by troops from Nepal, who had recently arrived at a military base near the Artibonite River. As anger grew, on November 15 thousands of protesters took to the streets of Cap Haïtien, Haiti's second-largest city, burning tires and closing the airport. They were met with gunfire from the MINUSTAH base in nearby Quartier Morin that killed two protesters and wounded 16 others. In the northern city of Pont Neuf, protesters set fire to a police station. Hundreds also protested in Hinche, demanding that MINUSTAH leave the country. On November 18, the protests spread to Port-au-Prince, where hundreds of youths erected barricades of burning tires and attacked MINUSTAH vehicles.

UN and Haitian officials condemned the protests as designed to disrupt the November 28 parliamentary and presidential elections. Held under the jackboot of foreign occupiers oppressing a population ravaged by intense poverty and disease, this exercise in "democracy" was a complete sham. Even before the polls closed, protests broke out against massive election fraud; two-thirds of the presidential candidates called for the results to be tossed out. At any rate, real authority is in the hands of the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission headed by Bill Clinton.

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Reuters

AP

Port-au-Prince, November 2010: People of quake-ravaged capital make their way through street (left); Cité Soleil slum residents argue over meager supply of clean water in midst of cholera epidemic (right).

WV Welcomes New Readers

Comrades and sympathizers of the Spartacist League, Spartacus Youth Clubs and Labor Black Leagues successfully concluded a six-week subscription campaign this fall, reaching out to new readers and regions where we do not have branches and making contact as well with longtime readers of our Marxist press. We exceeded our national quota of 2,175 points with a total of 2,555.5 points, with every local surpassing its quota. These points represent 1,146 subscriptions to *Workers Vanguard*, 80 to *Espartaco* (published by our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México) and 74 to the press of other International Communist League sections.

Our annual subscription drive is always a major national campaign, introducing readers not only to the biweekly *WV* but also to our international theoretical journal, *Spartacist*, our pamphlet series *Black History and the Class Struggle* and other ICL publications. The campaign also serves to give us a picture of current political consciousness and moods, from campuses to workplaces and union halls.

This subscription drive took place in the context of the continuing capitalist economic crisis—the worst since the Great Depression. While working people are reeling under the impact of layoffs, home foreclosures and budget cuts, students have been especially impacted by the slashing of financial aid. We encountered a lot of questions about Marxism and doubts about whether socialism can really work. At the same time, many people we talked to expressed hatred of capitalism and its effects. Our 2009 pamphlet, *Capitalist Anarchy and the Immiseration of the Working Class*, was one of the most popular giveaways.

People who bought subscriptions were often already left-leaning in some way or interested in Marxism in general due to life experience or their reading and wanted to find out more. This provided us an opening to explain our aim of building a revolutionary workers party to lead the working class in the overthrow of the capitalist system. Several subscriptions were sold on the basis of interest in the 1917 Russian Revolution and Soviet history, giving us an opportunity to highlight such publications as our pamphlet *Lenin and the Vanguard Party*, which explains the crucial role that the Bolshevik Party played in leading the first successful workers revolution.

Our opposition to capitalist politician Barack Obama (and all capitalist politicians, whether Republicans or Democrats) has set us apart from our reformist opponents, who celebrated Obama's election as U.S. imperialism's Commander-in-Chief. We have always maintained that Obama and the Democrats represented a facelift for the U.S. capitalist ruling class to better pursue its bloody aims abroad and its exploitation of working people at home. Indeed, the Obama administration has stepped up the war in Afghanistan while deporting nearly 390,000 immigrants in 2009 (an all-time high), further shredding civil liberties and attacking unions representing auto workers, teachers and others.

This year, comrades reported that for many people the bloom is off Obama. Some students who had been gung ho for Obama in 2008 had become politically apathetic, while some others were looking into anarchism. A comrade on our Washington, D.C., trip commented that "the mania for Obama seems to be wearing thin" even among the black student body at the elite Howard University. On our trip to Tidewater, Virginia, it was reported that "black workers we spoke with still had an emotional investment in Obama, but agreed things were getting worse."

Comrades from New York intervened at the October 2 "One Nation Working Together" rally in Washington, D.C., sponsored by the AFL-CIO and NAACP. Taking place a month before the midterm elections, the rally was unmistakably an electoral push for the Democrats. The labor misleaders pushed the lie of "national unity" between workers and their class enemy, telling workers hit by unemployment that the answer is more protectionism—i.e., that the workers from other countries are their enemy, not the U.S. capitalist class.

Doing their bit to keep working people tied to the capitalist Democratic Party, the reformist left avidly supported this flag-waving affair, which was given a bit of a left gloss through a "Socialist Contingent" composed of the International Socialist Organization, Socialist Action, Solidarity, Socialist Alternative, et al. We counterposed our revolutionary internationalist program to the rally's pro-Democratic Party class collaborationism and the labor tops' China-bashing and had several polarizing debates with members of opponent groups who came by our literature table.

Several locals reported that our placards and articles on China garnered a lot of attention and sparked discussions on our Trotskyist analysis of China and the other bureaucratically deformed workers states—Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea. People were notably interested in the major strike wave this spring and summer involving young migrant workers (see "Militant Strike Wave in China," *WV* No. 961, 2 July, and "China: Labor Struggles in the 'Socialist Market Economy'," *WV* Nos. 964 and 965, 10 September and 24 September). A comrade reported from North Carolina that especially due to those strikes and the Stalinist regime's response to them, "we sensed a greater openness to considering our arguments that China is not capitalist." Our program of unconditional military defense of China and proletarian political revolution to overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracy was the topic of a heated debate at our sub drive forum in Chicago.

Another issue that resonated with workers and students was our call for "full citizenship rights for all immigrants," which was featured in the public forums held by our locals during this campaign (see *WV* No. 969, 19 November, for the presentation in New York). Comrades from Los Angeles went to Arizona, where they sold many subscriptions to students who saw our signs denouncing the anti-immigrant witchhunt carried out by both Democrats and Republicans. A number of students were also interested in our *WV* articles on science denouncing medical quackery, as well as in our defense of gay rights. Our signs for "Free Abortion on Demand!" were often polarizing, a measure of socially conservative moods and religious beliefs held by many students.

In Los Angeles, we participated in demonstrations against the LAPD killing of Manuel Jamines, a 37-year-old day laborer, which sparked several days of protests in the city. In contrast to reformist groups like the Party of Socialism and Liberation, which call for "community control" of the police and sow illusions that the capitalist state can somehow be accountable to the "will of the people," our comrades carried such placards as: "No Illusions in Civilian Review Boards! Racist Cops, Racist Courts—Enemies of Labor, Blacks, Immigrants."

New York comrades made a trip to New Orleans that coincided with the fifth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, where the racist capitalist rulers showed their utter disdain for the lives of the poor and black population of the city. The team sold to a rally against budget cuts at the University of New Orleans that was brutally repressed by campus cops. One of the students met at the rally wrote to *Workers Vanguard* about the dire situation facing public education in the city (see "New Orleans Subscriber on Student Protest," *WV* No. 965, 24 September).

Comrades went to Puerto Rico as a follow-up trip after our visit in support of the two-month-long student strike against tuition hikes last spring, and to Montreal, where they worked with Canadian comrades in the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste. Our trips to the Pacific Northwest, Colorado, Charleston, South Carolina and other locations also gave us an important window into the current political consciousness, which we hope will enrich the pages of *WV*.

Congratulations to all comrades and friends for their efforts, especially our new members who participated in their first sub drive. A salute goes out to comrade Gene in New York for selling the most subscriptions (95 points). We welcome new readers and those who renewed their subscriptions, and encourage you to let us know what you think of our press and to get involved in the activities of the Spartacist League, Spartacus Youth Clubs and Labor Black Leagues.■

Haiti...

(continued from page 3)

The most popular politician, the exiled Aristide, was barred from the elections along with his Lavalas party. Elected president in 1990 with overwhelming support, Aristide was soon overthrown by his military chief, Raoul Cedras. To quell growing turmoil in Haiti, the U.S. Marines invaded in 1994 and returned him to office. After an interim regime under René Préval—the current nominal president—Aristide was re-elected in 2000 only to face a U.S.-led destabilization campaign and his ouster in 2004, when he was whisked to Africa on a U.S.-chartered jet.

Since that time, UN "peacekeepers" have backed up violent assaults by the Haitian police on poor communities and on demonstrations demanding Aristide's return. We demand that Aristide be allowed to return to Haiti and that the ban on his party be dropped. At the same time, as Marxists we have never given any political support to this capitalist politician and have opposed the imperialist interventions that installed him and subsequently removed him from office.

We support the struggles of the Haitian masses against their abject conditions, which are reinforced by imperialist occupation. But we understand that there is no solution to those conditions within Haiti itself. As we wrote in "Haiti: Mass Misery Under Imperialist Occupation," (*WV* No. 962, 30 July):

> "The only way out of the misery imposed on neocolonial Haiti lies through proletarian socialist revolution throughout the Caribbean and, crucially, in the North American imperialist heartland. But the social base for workers revolution is exceedingly narrow in a country as destitute and ground down as Haiti. Struggles by the Haitian masses against imperialist depredation must be linked to class and social struggle in the neighboring Dominican Republic, where Haitians are a sizable component of the proletariat, and elsewhere in the Caribbean....
>
> "Our perspective—for a workers and peasants government in Haiti as part of a socialist federation of the Caribbean—is inextricably linked to the fight for the revolutionary overthrow of U.S. imperialism. In diaspora, Haitians, Jamaicans and others can play a crucial role as a bridge to the rest of the American proletariat, particularly to other black workers. The key is to build revolutionary workers parties—sections of a reforged Fourth International—to lead the workers in this struggle."■

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The Chilean Miners and Pinochet's Murderous Legacy

The dramatic rescue in October of 33 Chilean miners, who had been trapped deep in the San José copper and gold mine for more than two months, riveted the attention of people around the world. As a billion television viewers worldwide looked on, right-wing billionaire Chilean president Sebastián Piñera personally greeted each miner pulled to the surface. Adding to the "national unity" hoopla, the Socialist Party's Michelle Bachelet, Piñera's predecessor, declared that the rescue "showed the bravery, the courage, the discipline and teamwork" of both the capitalist government and the brutally exploited miners.

Tearing through the patriotic hype, one of the rescued miners declared: "We were the victims of the businessmen who make millions and don't think of the suffering of poor people." Only hours before the cave-in, miners reported loud cracking noises announcing the impending disaster, but their request to evacuate the mine was refused. After the collapse, the miners sought to escape by climbing an emergency ladder in a ventilation shaft but discovered to their horror that the mine operators had not bothered to extend the ladder to the surface. Two days later, another cave-in blocked the shaft, sealing in the miners.

The mine, near Copiapó in northern Chile, had for years been notorious for its hazardous conditions—16 workers have died in the mine in recent years. In 2007, the government shut down the mine but then allowed it to reopen even though the required safety improvements—including the escape ladder—had not been implemented. Speaking shortly after the cave-in, the wife of one of the trapped miners recounted the concern her husband had raised just weeks before: "He said the mine was already caving in.... All the miners knew, but when they spoke to the mine owners, asking them to do something, the bosses said, 'If you don't want to work in the mine, then get up and go'" (*The Mirror* [London], 26 August).

Following the rescue, Piñera intoned, "Never again in our country will we permit people to work in conditions so unsafe and inhuman." But after the cameras stopped rolling, it was back to the capitalists' business as usual. Just a few weeks after the rescue, when two workers were killed at another mine near Copiapó, the sole reaction of the minister of mines was to issue a curt message on Twitter. Currently, miners have been on strike for almost four weeks at Collahuasi, the world's fourth-largest copper mine, which is owned by the international mining giants Xstrata and Anglo-American. Despite near-record world copper prices, the bosses have drawn a hard line against the miners' wage demands and insisted on a plan to extend work hours.

Miners in Chile, the world's top copper producer, represent a considerable concentration of proletarian class power. At the vast Escondida open-pit mine, 4,000 workers produce nearly 10 percent of the world's copper output. The dangers inherent in underground mining operations were put on gruesome display in November when explosions cost the lives of 29 New Zealand miners. But the conditions faced by Chile's miners, nearly 50 of whom died in mine accidents last year, are especially dangerous. Home to just 1 percent of the world's mine workers, Chile accounts for 8 percent of fatal accidents. It is especially dangerous in the small-to-medium-sized mines, which often lack modern technology and scrimp on basic safety measures. Workers at the medium-sized San José mine are paid such meager wages that most of their families live in improvised shacks lacking basic services.

Piñera and Pinochet

The lavish news coverage of the mine rescue was part of an effort by the regime to overcome any association with the murderous reign of General Augusto Pinochet, who led the coup that overthrew Socialist president Salvador Allende's popular-front government in Septemher 1973. With the prodding and aid of U.S. imperialism, Pinochet rode to power over mountains of corpses, killing at least 30,000 leftists, workers and peasants. The dictatorship sent untold thousands to hellish concentration camps and forced up to 100,000 into exile. To break the back of the working class, the Pinochet regime also took direct aim at the country's powerful unions, not least the miners, the best organized and most combative sector of the Chilean proletariat.

In fact, the government led by Piñera's National Renovation party has direct links to Pinochet's reign of terror. The president's brother, José Piñera, drafted the union-busting Labor Code adopted in 1979. Despite cosmetic reforms introduced by the "Concertación" coalition led by Socialists and Christian Democrats that succeeded Pinochet and ruled Chile for two decades starting in 1990, the Labor Code still applies today. It dictates that union negotiations can only take place at the plant level—not nationally or industry-wide—and severely restricts the types of issues that unions can negotiate. Extensive use of temporary workers and outsourcing is permitted, to the point that today the majority of Chilean workers in the mining industry are casual workers with few benefits or protections. Likewise, mine health and safety regulations were dismantled and inspections slashed to the point that today there are only three inspectors for the almost 900 mines in the Atacama region where the San José mine is located.

Indeed, the dark legacy of the 1973 coup haunted the families of the trapped miners like a recurring nightmare. Many recalled the 16 workers from the Copiapó region who were slaughtered in the predawn hours of 17 October 1973 by soldiers of the "Caravan of Death." That infamous death squad, operating under orders from Pinochet, flew from city to city on military helicopters to carry out assassinations of leftists and worker militants. One of those killed in that region was Agustín Villarroel, a saltpeter miner affiliated with the Communist Party (CP). His body, along with others, was dumped in a mine where the remains were recovered in 1990 after Pinochet stepped down as president. The miner's son compared that situation to the San José rescue operation, telling the *New York Times* (14 October) that "the only difference is that we didn't use a capsule to lift their remains. We used a bucket for the few bones we could find."

Reuters

Bloomberg

Above: Promoting lie of "national unity" between workers and exploiters, Chilean president Piñera (center right) joins in singing national anthem at mine rescue operation, October 13. Right: Striking Collahuasi miners carry symbolic coffin, November 8.

Popular-Front Betrayal

Pinochet's coup brought to a bloody end the Unidad Popular (UP) government headed by Allende that was elected in 1970. The UP was a popular front—a coalition of the Socialist Party (SP) and the CP with the small bourgeois Radical Party along with some Christian Democrats. The UP government was not, as reformists throughout the world alleged, a "people's government" on the "peaceful road to socialism." It was a ***bourgeois*** government pledged to maintaining capitalist private property.

While some leftists criticized Allende for hanging back from taking bold measures against the bourgeoisie, the alliance of the SP and CP with parties of the bourgeoisie served as a guarantee that the reformist workers parties would not—even under pressure from their base—take any steps that might threaten the capitalist profit system. Allende signed an agreement before he took office stating that he would not permit the formation of "private" armed forces—in other words, he would not countenance the formation of workers militias. He also agreed to appoint only those officers who had been trained in the traditional military academies. Thus promising not to tamper with the bourgeois armed forces, Allende lulled the working class by preaching faith in the supposed "neutrality" of the "democratic" military.

The Spartacist tendency was unique among leftists internationally in opposing any political support to the Unidad Popular:

> "It is the most elementary duty for revolutionary Marxists to irreconcilably oppose the Popular Front in the election and to place absolutely no confidence in it in power. Any 'critical support' to the Allende coalition is class treason, paving the way for a bloody defeat for the Chilean working people when domestic

continued on page 12

Reuters

London Times

Left: Salvador Allende (at right) with his commander-in-chief Augusto Pinochet one month before September 1973 military coup. Right: Earlier that year, popular-front Allende government unleashed cops to break up Santiago protest by 4,000 strikers from El Teniente copper mine.

The 1940s "Quit India" Movement

Stalinist Alliance with Churchill Betrayed Indian Revolution

The following originally appeared as a two-part article in Workers Hammer *Nos. 131 and 132 (September/October and November/December 1992), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League. Both parts are reprinted below, incorporating a minor factual correction.*

Part One

"The Indian scene [in 1947] was heavy with menace, but one thing at least gave [British Labour prime minister Major Clement] Attlee great satisfaction. How gratifying it was, he noted, that an old Haileybury School boy like himself [Sir Cyril Radcliffe] was being sent out to take on the task of drawing a line through the [Punjabi] homelands of eighty-eight million human beings."

"In India, Sikhs and Hindus prowled the cars of ambushed trains slaughtering every circumcised male they found. In Pakistan, Moslems raced along the trains they had stopped, murdering every male who was not circumcised."

—Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, *Freedom at Midnight*

Fifty years ago India's struggle for independence from Britain entered its final, decisive phase. Commonly known as the "Quit India" movement after the main slogan put out by Mohandas Karamchand ("Mahatma" or "great soul") Gandhi's bourgeois Indian National Congress in August 1942, this phase swelled to a crescendo between 1945 and 1946. Soon after this, the subcontinent was arbitrarily partitioned into an 80 per cent Hindu-dominated India and an Islamic-confessional Pakistan; a horrendous communal blood-bath was unleashed. The movement's denouement in February 1948 presented an appropriately bizarre neocolonial spectacle: Britain's last troops in India, the Somerset Light Infantry, disappeared marching westward through Bombay's arched Gateway of India (where the "King Emperor" George V had landed in 1911) to the strains of "God Save the King" and "Auld Lang Syne," played in parting salute by an Indian Navy honour guard band of Sikhs and Gurkhas.

Yet, at its tumultuous peak the mass upheaval, for a few crucial historic moments far outstripping the planned limits of its self-appointed minders and misleaders, had rocked the entire subcontinent, lifting it on to the very precipice of revolution. Millions of workers, soldiers, peasants, students and women, many flying Communist red flags alongside the Congress tricolour and the Muslim League's green flag, defying British tank and machine-gun fire and even naval and aerial bombardment, jammed the streets and fields from Karachi to Calcutta. Cries of "*Inquilab Zindabad!*" (Long live the revolution!) filled the air. Armed peasants started forcibly seizing land and setting up "soviets." And in February 1946 a powerful strike by ratings (enlisted men) of the Royal Indian Navy in Bombay touched off an armed uprising by hundreds of thousands, including Royal Indian Air Force men, in that port and across the whole, electrified country, bringing it to a virtual standstill.

Britain had lost control. Posed point-blank was not only India's political independence from two hundred and fifty years of the British jackboot; the *social* liberation of India's toiling masses from millennia of indigenous caste, gender, communal and class oppression was also now suddenly within grasp. What was needed was a revolutionary vanguard party of India's small but strategic and modern, urbanised industrial working class which could rally and draw behind it the millions of peasant poor and other oppressed, oust the British, and put the native capitalist-landlord alliance out of business, launching a direct offensive for both national and social liberation through capturing proletarian state power.

This policy, that of the Permanent Revolution, had been the programme of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks in the victorious October Revolution, thirty years earlier. That revolution had brought national and social liberation to the masses of backward Tsarist Russia, whose Tadzhik, Uzbek and other Central Asian peoples just on the other side of the Himalayan Pamirs from northern Kashmir) had been catapulted from the seventh century into the twentieth as a result. In India the toiling masses had seen the Russian Revolution as a beacon of hope.

Yet by midnight of 14 August 1947, when Congress prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru rose to address "free" India's parliament of capitalists, landlords and princes, the spectacular upsurge had been derailed. Instead, a pro-imperialist alliance of the Congress bourgeoisie and the Muslim League landlords had successfully diverted the revolutionary momentum into British imperialism's waiting trap, the nightmare of communalist Partition. India's working masses had paid with their lives—and were now about to pay even more—for the absence of a revolutionary party to lead its millions in an independent struggle for workers power.

Sunil Janah

Bettmann

Above: Peasants rally under red flag in Punjab, 1945. Left: Joseph Stalin with Britain's Winston Churchill and U.S. president Harry Truman at Potsdam Conference, July 1945.

The new Muslim theocratic state of Pakistan (whose Punjabi-dominated west wing and Bengali east wing looked at each other across 1,000 miles of hostile Hindu Indian territory) was carved out of the living bodies of thoroughly interpenetrated peoples, precipitating the biggest forced population transfers and one of the ghastliest communal slaughters in history. And in this crime, the Labour government of imperialist Britain and their bourgeois-landlord alliance of lackeys in the Congress and Muslim League were *fully aided and abetted by the treacherous Stalinist trinity of the Kremlin, the Communist Party of Great Britain and the Communist Party of India*. For in this historic betrayal, Stalin was the mover, the CPGB the enforcer and the CPI the executor on the spot.

Hulton-Deutsch

1930: Women protesting ban of Indian National Congress meeting confront colonial police in Bombay (now Mumbai).

Lessons of the Chinese Revolution

The developing militant wave and the advent of World War II could have signalled the opening of great possibilities for a revolutionary party the size of the CPI. Instead the second imperialist war was to bring the nadir of Stalinist betrayal in India. To understand the CPI's treachery on behalf of Churchill's war effort it is necessary to take up the positions adopted by the Stalinised Comintern as against the Leninist tradition upheld by Trotsky and the Left Opposition.

The Russian Revolution in 1917 fully confirmed Trotsky's prognosis that "the complete victory of the democratic revolution in Russia is conceivable only in the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, leaning on the peasantry. The dictatorship of the proletariat, which would inevitably place on the order of the day not only democratic but socialistic tasks as well, would at the same time give a powerful impetus to the international socialist revolution. Only the victory of the proletariat in the West could protect Russia from bourgeois restoration and assure it the possibility of rounding out the establishment of socialism" ("Three Concepts of the Russian Revolution" [1939]).

Under the slogan of "socialism in one country" embraced by the conservative, nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy which had risen in the context of the isolated, war-weary and encircled Soviet workers state, the struggle for the extension of the revolution internationally was shelved in favour of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. This translated into defeat after defeat for the world proletariat and eventually transformed—after ruthless purges in most cases—the parties of the (Third) Communist International into tools of class-collaboration with their "own" bourgeoisies. In the colonial and neocolonial world it meant rejecting the lessons of October and resuscitating the old Menshevik formula of "two-stage" revolution. As in China earlier, this was to have a devastating effect on the revolutionary proletariat of India.

The tragedy of the Chinese Revolution of 1927-28 was a powerful negative confirmation of the permanent revolution, and it was over China that Trotsky extended his correct prognosis in Russia to all of the backward, colonial countries. The debate on China was whether or not

to subordinate the Chinese workers and peasants to the native bourgeoisie in the form of Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang in which the CP [Communist Party] was operating. When the Chinese CP proposed to leave the Kuomintang the plan was vetoed by the Comintern Executive on Stalin's instruction. They were directed to hold down the class struggle against the "anti-imperialist" bourgeoisie in the cities and contain the peasant movement in the countryside. In early 1926 the Kuomintang itself was admitted to the International as an associate party. Only a few weeks later, on 20 March, Chiang carried out his first anti-communist coup, barring CP members from all leadership posts and demanding a list of all CP members in the Kuomintang. Under orders, the CP complied! After a challenge from the United Opposition leaders Trotsky and Zinoviev and during the crucial days of the Shanghai insurrection which began in March 1927, Stalin stuck to the policy. The main task in China for the Communists was "the further development of the Kuomintang." On 12 April the Kuomintang army carried out a massacre which cost the lives of tens of thousands of Communists and militant workers who had laid down their arms at Stalin's orders. This was "socialism in one country" in practice!

Congress—the Indian "Kuomintang"—and the CPI

"India," Trotsky had noted in May 1930, "is the classic colonial country as Britain is the classic metropolis. All the viciousness of the ruling classes and every form of oppression that capitalism has used against the backward people of the East is most completely and frightfully summed up in the history of the gigantic colony on which the British imperialists have settled themselves like leeches for the past century and a half" ("The Revolution in India, Its Tasks and Dangers," *Writings of Leon Trotsky [1930]*). Like pre-revolutionary Russia and China, the road to national liberation, agrarian reform, social equality and advancement lay in the programme of proletarian revolution, requiring a vanguard party defending the political independence of the working class. The weak national bourgeoisie, tied by a thousand threads to imperialism, could in no way carry out even the "democratic" tasks posed.

The Indian industrial bourgeoisie, which started growing towards the very end of the 19th century and expanded considerably during World War I, was still no match for British industrial and finance capital. The Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India (BLPI—Indian section of the Trotskyist Fourth International) pointed out:

> "Despite the advance of Indian capital, British capital remains in effective monopolist domination in banking, commerce, exchange, insurance, shipping, in the tea, coffee and rubber plantations, and in the jute industry. In iron and steel, Indian capital has been forced to come to terms with British capital, and even in the cotton industry, the home of Indian capital, the control of British capital through the managing agency system is very great."
>
> —*BLPI Draft Programme*

Indian reality emphatically underlined the revolutionary correctness of the perspective of permanent revolution. The Indian Trotskyists drew the correct conclusion that "the Indian bourgeoisie, shackled as it is to Imperialism, cannot play the historical role of the West-European bourgeoisie in liberating and developing the productive forces. The industrial advance of India demands absolutely the overthrow of Imperialism, with which Indian bourgeois interests are indissolubly bound, and the overthrow of which they are bound to resist" (*ibid*).

Faced with British imperialist intransigence, the weak and dependent Indian bourgeoisie sought methods of struggle that could pressure the colonial masters to make concessions without disturbing the social order by unleashing struggles of the masses that would threaten not just the British but also the Indian capitalists and their landlord brothers. The origins of Congress are instructive in this regard.

An English ex-civil servant of the Empire, A.O. Hume, was a founder of the Indian National Congress in 1885. Its stated third aim was "THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE UNION BETWEEN ENGLAND AND INDIA, BY SECURING THE MODIFICATION OF SUCH OF ITS CONDITIONS AS MAY BE UNJUST OR INJURIOUS TO THE LATTER COUNTRY" (*The Indian Nationalist Movement, 1885-1947: Select documents*, ed. B. N. Pandey). As its first president, W. C. Bonnerjee explained:

> "Lord Dufferin...said there was no body of persons in this country who performed the functions which Her Majesty's Opposition did in England...and as the English were necessarily ignorant of what was thought of them and their policy in native circles, it would be very desirable in the interests as well of the rulers as of the ruled that Indian politicians should meet yearly and point out to the Government in what respects the administration was defective and how it could be improved" (*ibid*).

Enter Gandhi. At the time he arrived on the nationalist political scene at the start of World War I, Gandhi could be found enthusiastically urging London's Indians to "think imperially" and organising a Field Ambulance Training Corps as his personal contribution to the interimperialist war "effort." Gandhi's job was to extract as much as possible from the British, in the common interests of saving capitalism, while keeping the burgeoning and now increasingly militant struggles of the workers and peasants at bay. The textile magnate Ambalal Sarabhai put it succinctly when he said Gandhi "was the best guarantee against communism which India possessed" (D. A. Low, *Congress and the Raj*).

It was only after World War I that India's modern proletariat, numbering five million by the second imperialist world war, emerged as a distinct force. The first great wave of strikes (1918-21) was triggered by mass immiseration under war conditions, a flu epidemic that killed 14 million, the Amritsar massacre in the wake of the draconian Rowlatt Act, and the impact of the 1917 Revolution. And it was the backdrop to Gandhi's 1920-21 mass civil disobedience campaign for minimal constitutional reforms. The first six months of 1920 saw 200 strikes involving half a million workers, along with growing peasant struggles. Gandhi got cold feet, declaring that he had committed a "blunder of Himalayan proportions which had enabled ill-disposed persons, not true passive resisters at all, to perpetrate disorders." In February 1922, on the eve of another passive resistance crawl, when 22 policemen were killed in the course of a peasant anti-rent agitation, Gandhi called off the entire non-cooperation movement, essentially going into *purdah* over the next decade. And the Congress told its supporters that withholding rent to the *zemindars* [landlords] was contrary to its policies and "the best interests of the country." Gandhi re-emerged in the thirties when new waves of militant struggles broke out. He reiterated his opposition to "class war" and called for the "harmonious cooperation of labour and capital, the landlord and tenant."

The situation in India not only cried out for a revolutionary solution but provided great opportunities for building a communist-led movement against colonial oppression and to overthrow capitalism. The prestige of the October Revolution was immense among the toiling masses. Founded among other places in revolutionary Tashkent in 1920, the CPI had early succumbed to the global anti-revolutionary policies emanating from Stalin's Comintern after 1924; Stalin's search for "peaceful coexistence" did not help the Indian Communists. In the late twenties they employed themselves with generally rightist plans for front organisations and multi-class parties. Then the "Third Period" had them pursuing sterile sectarian policies which condemned the Indian nationalists equally with the British imperialists.

In the popular front period (1935-39) they accepted the leadership of the Congress and "Gandhiji" as necessary for the first "democratic" stage of the revolution. And moreover, because Stalin was pursuing an alliance with "democratic" imperialist Britain, the CPI soft-pedalled the struggle against British imperialism, placing the emphasis on reforms and gradualist change. At the Seventh Congress of the Third International in Moscow in July-August 1935, the CPI was denounced for long-standing "left" sectarian errors and for using slogans such as "an Indian Workers' and Peasants' Soviet Republic," and "confiscation of lands belonging to the zemindars (landlords) without compensation." Even as late as March 1936 the Congress was characterised as "definitely a class organisation of the Indian bourgeoisie" in a CPI publication, but the new class-collaborationist line laid down by "India experts" for the CPGB, R. Palme Dutt and Ben Bradley, was:

Bettmann

1942: Gandhi with Labour politician Stafford Cripps, who could not get even Gandhi's Congress Party to accept British imperialism's paltry "concessions."

> "The National Congress can play a great part and a foremost part in the work of realising the anti-imperialist People's Front. It is even possible that the National Congress by the further transformation of its organisation and programme may become the form of realisation of the anti-imperialist People's Front" (quoted in S. Tagore, *Against the Stream*).

The CPI supported the Congress in the provincial elections of 1937. In 1936 a miserable and tokenistic Congress proposal for agricultural reform was lauded. In fact the Congress ministries of this period did next to nothing to alleviate the condition of the peasantry. Indicatively the only places where Congress ministries even talked about land reform were in areas where the landlords were to a large extent Muslims and the peasants Hindus, such as the United Provinces, Bihar and Madras.

At the same time the inception of Congress ministries in some parts of India gave the CPI more room to organise, and with growing mass disillusionment with Congress the CPI began to grow significantly. It developed strong roots in the working class in major industrial cities like Bombay, and considerable influence in student and peasant organisations. But it held the struggles back in the interests of the alliance with Congress. In November 1938, after the shootings of workers protesting anti-trade-union legislation introduced by the Congress ministry in Bombay, one "Congress Communist" (CPI entrist in Congress) told a protest rally: "Anger and sorrow have been kindled in our minds by the oppression that has been perpetrated on the workers of Bombay. Still, we are proceeding with restraint with our eyes fixed on national solidarity and unity."

The CPI in World War II

During the period of the Stalin-Hitler pact the CPI as all the other parties of the Comintern (which would be formally liquidated by Stalin in 1943) denounced the "democratic" facade of the British imperialists in their war against Germany. Indeed in contrast to the Stalinists of His Majesty's CPGB who displayed visible discomfort at Stalin's about face (with its pro-German tilt), many militants of the CPI appear to have relished the opportunity to take a full-blooded stance against their hated main enemy. In the context of mounting anti-imperialist militancy, this line would have come increasingly into contradiction with the CPI's continuing adherence to the Stalinist policy of a "first" "democratic" stage in alliance with the bourgeois Congress, provoking splits and opportunities for revolutionary regroupment. But when Hitler's "Operation Barbarossa" was launched against the Soviet Union in June 1941 and the wartime alliance between Britain and the USSR was sealed, the Comintern instructed another sharp turn to the "People's War Against Fascism" and all-out support for the war effort in the imperialist countries *and their colonies*. As late as July 1941 the CPI, lacking precise instructions from Stalin via the CPGB, however, had adopted a line which distinguished between the interimperialist war between the Allied and Axis powers and the need to defend the Soviet Union. A CPI manifesto issued at the time read in part:

> "The Communist Party declares that the only way in which the Indian people can help in the just war which the Soviet is waging, is by fighting all the more vigorously for their own emancipation from the imperialist yoke. Our attitude towards the British Government and the imperialist war remains what it was.... We can render really effective aid to the Soviet Union, only as a free people. That is why our campaign for the demonstration of our support and solidarity with the Soviet Union, must be coupled with the exposure of the imperialist hypocrisy of the Churchills and Roosevelts with the demand for the intensification of our struggle for independence" (quoted in David N. Druhe, *Soviet Russia and Indian Communism*).

But the CPI leadership, after the years of its popular front treachery, were not going

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India...

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to oppose Stalin's dictates. They soon embraced the Allied war effort. In the *Guidelines of the History of the Communist Party of India*, by the Central Party Education Department, the CPI noted the July position, adding: "Then a document proposing change of line was sent by the comrades in Deoli camp in December 1941. In February 1942 the PB said in a resolution: 'Make the Indian people play a people's role in the people's war.' In July 1942 the ban on the CPI was lifted and releases started. The main slogans were correct: 'National government for national defence.' 'National unity for national government'."

Let's be clear. The emissaries from the Comintern responsible for dealing with the CPI—the Communist Party of Great Britain—broke the news to their Indian comrades that they were out of line. Harry Pollitt's letter announcing this was even deliberately permitted by the British authorities to be passed to the Communists incarcerated in Deoli prison. Debate ensued and there were those who broke with the CPI rather than scab on the struggle against British imperialism for the sake of the "People's War" but the CPI leaders accepted the new line. Their support to the war would now be "unqualified, wholehearted and full-throated."

For its part Congress' formal position was that its support to the war was conditional on being granted independence from Britain. What this boiled down to was "demanding" some concessions in exchange for producing cannon fodder for the imperialist war effort. Then, emboldened by Britain's difficulties as Japan advanced through the Pacific and into Burma and cognisant that they might soon need to deal with another imperialist overlord, Congress went from conditional support to open opposition, seeking to force a settlement with British imperialism. Even arch-reactionary Churchill was compelled to recognise that concessions were needed to shore up the shaky Raj. Sir Stafford Cripps, a "left" Labourite reputed to be sympathetic to the Indian national cause was despatched to offer some meagre and insulting divide-and-rule concessions. Even Gandhi called them "a post dated cheque on a bank that was failing." Then as Charles Wesley Ervin related in his "Trotskyism in India: Origins through World War Two (1935-1945)": "On 8 August 1942 Congress called for mass civil disobedience to pressurise the British to 'quit India.' The British panicked. Within twelve hours every important Congress leader was in jail or on his way. News of the arrests brought thousands onto the streets of Bombay.... The August Struggle had begun" (*Revolutionary History* Vol. 1, No. 4, Winter 1988-89).

Arguing that Congress should form a temporary national government in collaboration with the Muslim League, the CPI bitterly opposed the "Quit India" resolution and in the ensuing struggles denounced Congress for its "sabotage." Even in its mendacious retrospective, the CPI's "Guidelines" admit: "It adopted an antistruggle antistrike line. A line of avoiding [!] mass struggles was worked out on the plea that they would damage the war effort or help profascist elements to sabotage it, eg. CC [Central Committee] plenum reports, articles in weekly *People's War*. Quit India movement was opposed on the same basis [as] the Forward Bloc [Subhas Chandra Bose's split] and socialists who attacked communists as 'British agents' were denounced in retaliation as fifth column and fascist agents."

The newly formed BLPI plunged into the August events. Key cadre came from exiled Ceylonese Trotskyists who had escaped arrest and imprisonment in Ceylon, after the British crackdown on their party for its revolutionary defeatist stance on the imperialist war and their organising of militant struggles among the strategic Tamil plantation workers. As the heroic Trotskyists argued in their Bombay leaflet the very day the historic "August Action" began:

> "The slogans of 'Abolition of Landlordism without Compensation' and 'Cancellation of Peasant Debt' must be leading slogans of the struggle. Not only no-tax campaigns against the government, but also no-rent campaigns against all landlords, must be commenced on the widest possible scale, leading to the seizure of land by the peasants through Peasants' Committees.
>
> "Manning the nerve centres of the economy, the workers are in the position to deal the most devastating blows against imperialism.... A mass general political strike against British imperialism will paralyse and bring to a stop the whole carefully built up machinery of imperialist administration.
>
> "The Indian soldiers, who are peasants in uniform, cannot fail to be affected by the agrarian struggle against landlordism and imperialism."

Many BLPI militants were imprisoned in the immediate aftermath. The British were not the only ones out to crush them, either; the CPI press "viciously slandered the Trotskyists as 'criminals and gangsters who help the Fascists' by allegedly calling for 'strikes, sabotage, food riots and all forms of anarchy' and 'attempting to stir up trouble in all war industries'.... Stalinists from Ceylon were brought over to India to hunt for Samasamajists [Ceylonese Trotskyists], and CPI stool-pigeons fingered militants to the police during the war" (Ervin, *ibid*).

Der Spiegel

British "divide and rule" machinations led to horrendous communal slaughter during partition of India, 1947.

The BLPI's draft programme made an eloquent exposition of Leninist tactics in the second imperialist war:

> "With the mass slaughter, the unparalleled destruction and untold sufferings entailed by the war, the international proletariat and the oppressed masses of the colonies are being driven to the point where they will see in revolution the only way out. 'The chief enemy of the people is in its own country.' The prime task of proletarian revolutionaries in the present imperialist conflict is to follow the policy of revolutionary defeatism in relation to their 'own' government and to help develop the class struggle to the point of civil war regardless of the possibility of such a course leading to the defeat of one's 'own' government....
>
> "International developments are governed by two main contradictions. The first is the contradiction of the existence of a workers' state (the Soviet Union) in a capitalist world. The second is the inter-imperialist rivalry which has now broken out openly into war.... But the supercession of the capitalist-workers' state antagonism by the inter-imperialist antagonism and the temporary postponement of a united capitalist war of intervention against the Soviet Union by no means removed the danger of an attack on the Soviet Union by one of the parties in the inter-imperialist embroilment....
>
> "But the parties of the Fourth International, while defending the Soviet Union from imperialist attack, do not for a single moment give up the struggle against the Stalinist apparatus. Incapable of carrying out the real defence of the Soviet Union, the Stalinist bureaucracy seeks the aid not of the international proletariat, but exclusively of Anglo-American Imperialism.... The workers' state will be able to emerge victorious from the holocaust of war only under one condition, and that is, if it is assisted by the revolution in the West or in the East."

Thus the BLPI stood out as a revolutionary pole during the Second World War. Despite its exemplary work, programmatic soundness and significant local successes, the small and overwhelmingly clandestine forces of the BLPI were insufficient to take advantage of the revolutionary crisis. The Congress leaders feared the unleashing of the workers and peasants against the capitalists and landlords many times more than they desired to enforce the demand to "Quit India" on the British imperialists; the Stalinists with their grovelling before Churchill had made themselves for a key period of time "the most universally detested political organisation in India." The intervention of a revolutionary Trotskyist party with some real weight in the proletariat was at this juncture the decisive element in whether the question of India was solved along the October model or left after post-war "independence" to the bloody partition designed by the British imperialists.

During this period of subordination to Churchill and in line with the British divide-and-rule stratagems, the CPI flirted with the feudalist, British-backed Muslim League. It even decided there was a Muslim "nation" and adopted for some time the project of Pakistan. Later, they would shift back to fawning blandishments to Gandhi's Congress. We will take up in greater detail these and other concrete examples of their perfidy and how Stalinist betrayal helped pave the way for the "solution" of the Churchills, Mountbattens and Cripps in the second and concluding part of this article.

Part Two

In their efforts to crush the Indian independence struggle and radical social struggle, imperialist Britain, Churchill's wartime coalition and Attlee's Labour government alike, and the bourgeois-landlord lackeys in the Congress and Muslim League were fully aided and abetted by the treacherous Stalinist trinity of the Kremlin, the Communist Party of Great Britain and the Communist Party of India. The first part of this article concluded:

> "During this period of subordination to Churchill and in line with the British divide-and-rule stratagems, the CPI flirted with the feudalist, British-backed Muslim League. It even decided there was a Muslim 'nation' and adopted for some time the project of Pakistan. Later, they would shift back to fawning blandishments to Gandhi's Congress. We will take up in greater detail these and other concrete examples of their perfidy and how Stalinist betrayal helped pave the way for the 'solution' of the Churchills, Mountbattens and Cripps in the second and concluding part of this article."

Before turning to the CPI's own contribution to the horrors of the Partition, it is worth reviewing the line of the Communist Party of Great Britain on India during World War II, not least because the CPGB were the agency for enforcing the subordination of the struggle for independence to Churchill's war in its "mentor" role to the Indian Communists.

Having enlisted enthusiastically in the "People's War" the Communist Parties not only insisted on "sacrifices" (i.e., no strike pledges, cessation of social struggle) from the working classes within the "democratic" imperialist countries but also from the colonial slaves of those imperialisms. Thus, when resistance to British rule broke out in India, the British Stalinists (as well as the CPI) denounced the struggle as playing "into the hands of the Axis powers" (Black, *Stalinism in Britain*). CPGB leader Harry Pollitt wrote to Churchill with the following advice: "our [!] paramount aim must be to win the willing co-operation of the Indian nation in the common struggle against Fascism." At its Congress in 1944 the CPGB emphatically rejected independence before the war ended, instructing the Indian masses that: "Establishment of a representative Indian National Government as an ally of the United Nations during the war, and freedom for the Indian people to choose their own form of Government *after* the war" was the order of the day. Black's description of these Stalinists as the "Empire builders of the British 'Communist' Party" is apt.

The Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India, revolutionary Trotskyists, described the situation in India during the war:

> "British imperialism has instituted a system of repressive legislation, progressively inaugurating a *gendarme* regime not less systematic and ruthless than that of Russian czarism or German fascism. Since the commencement of the imperialist war, repression has been many times intensified. Even those nominal rights previously possessed by the masses have been openly withdrawn, and a naked rule of terror substituted through the Defense of India Act.... The press has been gagged by a series of iniquitous Press Acts and a systematic police censorship of all publications. Rights of free speech and assembly have been so curtailed that they are practically non-existent. Radical and revolutionary political parties are compelled to lead an underground existence.
>
> "The right to strike no longer exists in all 'essential war industries'.... Thousands of militant mass leaders have been imprisoned on flimsy pretexts or detained without trial. The restriction of individual movement by means of externment and internment orders has become a commonplace..." (quoted in Henry Judd, *India in Revolt*).

By contrast the ban on the CPI was lifted by a grateful British Raj in 1942 and a government circular of 20 September 1943 praised the CPI as "almost the only Party which fought for victory." A CPI self-criticism produced years later is damning enough about what this meant:

> "It adopted an antistruggle antistrike line. A line of avoiding mass struggles was worked out on the plea that they would damage the war effort or help profascist elements to sabotage it, eg. CC plenum reports, articles in weekly *People's War*. Quit India movement was opposed, on the same basis the Forward Bloc and socialists who attacked communists as 'British agents' were denounced in retaliation as fifth column and fascist agents. In B.T. Ranadive's report to the first congress on 'Working Class and National Defence' it was stated that production is 'a sacred trust' and 'conditional support of production was a left-nationalist deviation' therefore 'strikes should be firmly prevented'."

In addition to its self-confessed "antistruggle" line during the war, the CPI as well played straight into the hands of British imperialism's schemes to consciously promote communalist divisions.

CPI and Britain's "Divide-and-Rule"

From the outset, all Indian nationalism was "a theme scored with religious, class, caste, and regional variations" (Wolpert, *A New History of India*), which given its social origins, was dominantly Hindu and upper-caste-based and frequently openly reactionary. A prime example was the early Congress "Extremist" leader B. G. Tilak, who first made his mark when he opposed the token reformist 1891 "Age of Consent" Bill (raising the age of statutory rape of child brides from ten to twelve) under the war cry "Religion in danger!" Gandhi alienated vast numbers of Muslims with his explicitly Hindu-myth and scripture-based rhetoric, describing his utopia as *Ram Rajya* ("the kingdom of Ram"—the Hindu epic hero-god). Such themes are the basis for subsequent fascistic Hindu chauvinism, such as the BJP/RSS [Bharatiya Janata Party/Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh] combine today. In the absence of a communist leadership consciously able to transcend and combat it by bringing the revolutionary proletarian, anti-

communal, integrated class axis decisively to bear on the events leading up to 1947, this poison was bound to skewer any possibility of a progressive solution to India's complex internal problems.

Far from communalism being an "eternal" feature of the Indian landscape, as the racist imperialist apologists would have it, it was the British who, through their systematic backing of one community against another to subjugate both, consciously nurtured this phenomenon as well as other caste, religious and national differences. Following the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny (significantly sparked by the refusal by Muslim and upper-caste Hindu sepoys [soldiers] alike to bite a new cartridge coated with animal fat), which far exceeded the bounds of the initial triggering episodes and revealed the depth of anti-British anger in the country, Governor General Elphinstone urged: "Our endeavor should be to uphold in full force the (for us) fortunate separation which exists between the different religions and races; not to endeavor to amalgamate them" (Henry Judd, *India in Revolt*). From this to the creation of separate Hindu and Muslim electorates in 1905-6 and thence to a series of other notorious "Communal Awards" culminating in the Partition: the imperialist logic of "divide-and-rule" was clear.

The novel *Tamas* no doubt truly portrays the efforts of CPI militants in the Punjab to fight the communalist slaughter during the Partition, but that blood-bath was prepared both by the CPI's general support to the bourgeois nationalists and its particular wartime policies with respect to the Muslim question. One aspect of the Cripps' Mission proposals in 1942 was a concession aimed at the Muslim League that areas could "opt out." Given that Jinnah's Muslim League had pledged "benevolent neutrality" in the imperialist war and the importance of recruitment from Muslim Punjabis, Pathans and Baluchis for the British Indian Army, this was a crucial divide-and-rule attempt to uphold the British war effort. The CPI, in its Central Party Education Department's *Guidelines of the History of the Communist Party of India* (1974) admits the "serious mistake our party made on the question of Pakistan":

> "With the antistruggle line referred to above went the right-opportunist approach to the question of Congress-League (or national) unity, logically culminating in our support to Pakistan and the akali demand for sikh homeland. Failure to build up enough pressure on British imperialists and to build unity from below led to helpless reliance on unity from above. 'Destiny of the nation depends on national unity—Congress-League unity' which with Jinnah adamant on his demand for Pakistan led to trailing behind the Muslim League in order to bring Gandhi-Jinnah together."

The CPI went from denouncing the Muslim League as reactionary and communalist (which it was) to generally giving it more favourable coverage than Congress. Muslim League General Secretary Liaquat Ali Khan for example praised the CPI for its "ceaseless efforts to convince the Hindu masses of the justice of the demand for the rights of self-determination to Muslims." And CPI leader Joshi argued in August 1944 for strong and independent Muslim states in the north-west and north-east. Additionally in late 1944 the CPI argued for separate electorates for Untouchables, exactly in line with British imperialist "divide-and-rule" manoeuvres at that time.

The CPI's flirtation with the Muslim League and Pakistan was not some healthy attempt to grapple with the complexities of the national question as some apologists have suggested, but a direct product of the alliance with Churchill and their efforts to cement that alliance. After all the Muslim League was also opposed to the "Quit India" struggles. And when the CPI "corrected" its flirtation with the feudalist Muslim League it was only to swing back to bourgeois Congress, policies that led directly to the CPI and CPI(M)'s [Communist Party of India (Marxist)] refusal today to defend legitimate national struggles such as those of the Kashmiris and the Sikhs.

In the service of tailing Congress, CPI leader P.C. Joshi reached new depths of Stalinist prostration before the leader of India's Kuomintang. At the time of Gandhi's release from prison in 1944, Joshi declared:

> "Gandhiji, the beloved leader of the greatest patriotic organisation of our people, the mighty Indian National Congress is back in our midst again.... Every son and daughter of India, every patriotic organisation of our land, is looking to the greatest son of our nation to take it out of the bog in which none is safe."

Amidst this record of sordid betrayal, acknowledged by the Stalinists' own self-criticisms, about the only thing left for them to point to in that period is the relief work that the CPI organised during the Bengal famine. That famine in 1943 was a direct result of the imperialist war: wartime inflation, grain speculation and hoarding exacerbated by the loss of grain from Burma led to mass starvation. The arrogant indifference of the colonial administration was compounded by Churchill's decision to cut back shipping to India. A.J.P. Taylor noted "A million and a half Indians died of starvation for the sake of a white man's quarrel in North Africa" (*English History 1914-1945*).

The CPI's famine relief work was not part of some revolutionary agitation against the war, but linked closely to its "war effort" on the food production "front." Even if it did assist many in dire straits, the CPI's famine relief work was a variant of Salvation Army mission work for Winston Churchill. In Bengal the CPI lost cadre because of its flirtation with the Muslim League, and it is noteworthy that in areas where the CPI dominated the peasant associations such as eastern Bengal and Telangana the peasant struggles over land and usury were restrained during the war compared to other areas.

The situation in Bengal impinges directly on the question of Subhas Chandra Bose and the Indian National Army (INA). There are Stalinoid critics of Gandhi's Congress (and thus presumably its CPI tails) who look to Bose's INA as a revolutionary alternative. At one time a left critic within Congress and elected as its head over the objections of Gandhi et al., Bose split to form the Forward Bloc Party in Bengal. Forward Bloc was banned and Bose arrested in 1940; he escaped on the eve of his trial in 1941 and travelled across northern India to Afghanistan, from there to Moscow. During the pre-June Russo-German alliance, Bose was welcomed by Hitler and "given high-powered radio facilities to beam daily broadcasts to India...urging his countrymen to rise in revolt against British tyranny" (Wolpert). In the spring of 1943, Bose travelled to Southeast Asia whereupon Tojo turned over all his Indian POWs to Bose's command. In January 1944 he started his Indian National Army on their march north crossing the borders of India and reached the outskirts of Tripura's state capital, Imphal, by May. Defeated by the British garrison, the INA surrendered in Rangoon and Bose escaped on the last Japanese plane to leave Saigon. He died in Formosa after a crash landing. When the captured officers of Bose's INA went on trial in the winter of 1945-6 they were widely heralded as nationalist martyrs. On 18 February 1946 the Royal Indian Navy mutinied in Bombay harbour; the mutiny spread to Karachi. The British stepped up their attempts to extricate themselves from India.

Undoubtedly the INA was popular, particularly in Bengal, and among its ranks were those seeking a way to fight British imperialism rather than "turning the other cheek" à la Gandhi. However the paeans offered to Bose in, for example, a feature article in the 4 August *Asian Times* as achieving "a signal victory" and providing "the last nail in the coffin of British rule in India" miss the point that larger world events had intervened and in fact Bose had ***subordinated*** himself to the Axis powers who were Britain's imperialist rivals during the war. Where the CPI bowed before Churchill, the INA functioned at the behest of and under the protection of the Japanese imperialists. As the Japanese forces scored victories in rapid succession at Hong Kong, Malaya, Singapore and Burma the possibility of a Japanese invasion and victory in India was strongly felt. Bose had thrown his lot in with another would-be colonial conqueror. The INA fought in Burma—just as Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang fought on the other side with American imperialism. Both the Kuomintang and the INA subordinated the national struggle to their respective imperialist overlords. In China and in Southeast Asia the colonial masses very quickly learnt that the Japanese masters were no better than their deeply hated English, American, Dutch and French masters. The tragedy in India, and especially Bengal, was that the masses were given no choice but subordination to one or another imperialist.

Times of India

Sunil Janah

Karsh

March in Bombay, February 1946, part of revolt by Royal Indian Navy enlisted men that electrified country and led to general strike in the city. Left: Massacre of demonstrators supporting sailors was carried out by British under Labour prime minister Clement Attlee (right).

These betrayals in India expose those such as the Stalinists of the *Lalkar* publication of the Indian Workers Association who absurdly insist that "revisionism" began with Khrushchev's reign. For them, "So long as Comrade Stalin was in the leadership of the CPSU and was organising the tireless vigilance that needed to be exercised" "trounc[ing]" "the reactionary Trotskyite and Bukharinite opposition" all was well! (In fact, the CPI(M) still celebrates Stalin's birthday in Calcutta.) And the Stalinists today prefer not to talk too much about their record in India during the Second World War, not only because it is such an affront to the revolutionary aspirations of the masses but also because they continue to pursue a class-collaborationist alliance with the Indian bourgeoisie.

Instead they seek to hide behind the figure of Stalin as a great war leader who defeated fascist barbarism. Somehow the Stalinist sins in India are to be exonerated on the basis that Stalin saved mankind. To this end, *Lalkar*'s Harpal Brar turgidly regurgitates all the old Stalinist lies about Tukhachevsky being an agent of Hitler to justify his murder and the purge of the Red Army officer corps in his book *Perestroika: The Complete Collapse of Revisionism*. In the course of these bloody purges—between 1937 and 1939 (i.e., beginning during the popular front period)—the Red Army lost three of its five Marshals, all eleven of its Deputy Commissars for Defence, 75 of 80 of its members of the Military soviet, all its military district commanders who held that post in June 1937. The naval and air chiefs of staff were killed. Thirteen out of 15 army commanders were shot, 57 out of 85 corps commanders were shot, as were 110 out of the 195 divisional commanders. In the Far Eastern forces, over 80 per cent of the staff were purged. Tukhachevsky had predicted an attack like Operation Barbarossa and he and his comrades had a lively sense of technological innovation. These experienced and talented veterans of the Civil War were replaced by incompetent cronies of Stalin, who abolished the Red Army's tank units—one of these replacements thought automatic weapons were just for policemen.

Right up to the day of the invasion Stalin was shipping vital raw materials to Germany. Warnings and precise intelligence from [Leopold] Trepper's Red Orchestra and Richard Sorge in Japan were labelled as "English provocations" and not passed on to the general staff. Stalin forbade the dispersal of the air force (and it was consequently massacred on the ground) and ruled out any effective planning of defence in depth. Even after the invasion had begun, Stalin countermanded orders for the artillery to return fire, and forbade air-raid precautions in cities under attack. The criminal conduct of Stalin and his gang directly led to the loss of two and a half million soldiers in 1941, huge areas of territory (including important

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ICL Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program

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Ireland...

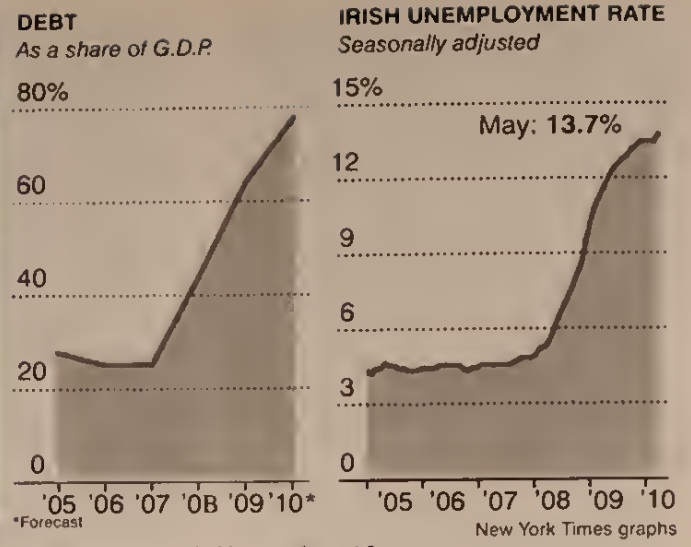
(continued from page 1)

today, heavily indebted Portugal and Spain are already caught up in the panic hitting European financial markets, with countries such as Belgium also at high risk. Ireland's bailout funds will serve to bolster its biggest creditors, which are primarily British banks. These include the Royal Bank of Scotland and Lloyds, both of which have already been bailed out by the British taxpayer and together stand exposed to some £80 billion [$125 billion] of Ireland's debts.

German and French banks are also exposed in Ireland. But the real concern is Spain, whose economy (not to mention deficit) is considerably larger than that of Greece, Ireland and Portugal combined and may be simply too big for the EU to rescue. If the crisis extends beyond Ireland, it will call into question the continued existence of the single European currency.

Salvaging Europe's *banks* is the primary aim of the imperialist bailouts of Ireland, Greece and any other country under consideration. In Ireland, Britain and Europe as a whole, each government is determined to make the working masses pay for a crisis that is caused by the capitalist system itself. The austerity measures that governments are trying to ram through, including slashing the wages of public sector workers, gutting pensions and ramping up taxes, hit hardest at the poorest in society. In Ireland and elsewhere this includes immigrant workers.

AP



IMF officials pass beggar on way to bailout meeting at Central Bank of Ireland, November 18.

For Class Struggle Against Capitalist Austerity!

The only way to fight these attacks is through hard class struggle. The Greek working class has already waged several one-day strikes this year against austerity. The French trade unions repeatedly brought the country tn a halt—including blockading the oil refineries—during September and October in opposition to legislation to raise the pension age. And the Spanish and Portuguese trade unions have staged one-day general strikes against austerity measures. However, the effectiveness of the workers' struggles has been hampered by the political bankruptcy of the workers' reformist leadership, who accept the inevitability of capitalist austerity while seeking to soften the blows.

What's needed is the forging of a revolutionary leadership of the working class based on the understanding that there are no common interests between the proletariat and the capitalist bloodsuckers: workers must fight for what we need, not for what the bosses say they can afford. To the capitalist rulers who brought Ireland to the brink of bankruptcy, workers must say: To hell with the savage National Recovery Plan! But to unleash the social power of the organised working class and to forge a class-struggle leadership in the trade unions requires a political struggle against the reformist trade-union bureaucracy and Labour Party leaders who are committed to defending the interests of Irish capitalism.

The servility of the trade-union bureaucrats was shown earlier this year when the leaders of Ireland's main unions signed a deal with the government known as the Croke Park agreement, which effectively renounced class struggle against a previously announced round of budget cuts until 2014. One of the signatories, Jack O'Connor, leader of the Services Industrial Professional Technical Union, said there was no alternative. "Let's assume we could win an industrial battle for a better deal—we'd still have to deal with the deficit," he told the London *Financial Times* (23 May). The Croke Park agreement was the culmination of years of treacherous "partnership" agreements that kept workers' wages low during the boom years in order to support the "Celtic Tiger" economy. There is no partnership between capital and labour, whose class interests are irreconcilably counterposed!

At a mass protest in Dublin called by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) on November 27, O'Connor was booed by demonstrators chanting "Sell-out!" The ICTU slogan for the demonstration was: "There is a better, fairer way"...to solve the capitalist crisis. One of the country's largest trade unions, the Technical Engineering and Electrical Union, is calling for a campaign of civil disobedience "if the government does not hold a general election." Tailing Labour and the trade-union leaders, reformist left groups are also angling for a general election. The Socialist Party's Member of the European Parliament, Joe Higgins, announced that his party will team up with remains of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) to form the United Left Alliance (ULA). Higgins is joined by Richard Boyd-Barrett, a local councillor elected on the SWP-led "People Before Profit Alliance" ticket.

Lest anyone think the ULA represents a challenge to the Irish capitalist order, Boyd-Barrett assured the *Irish Times* (26 November) that the alliance will be based on "simple principles of solidarity and people power" and was not "talking about extremism." The SWP is so mired in the ideology of the "death of communism" that even the cravenly reformist Socialist Party complains that the SWP argued that "socialist policies would put people off from voting for candidates or from getting involved in a left alliance" (socialistparty.net, 11 November).

As for the Socialist Party's version of "socialism," it amounts to nothing but old-fashioned Labour reformism, encapsulated today in the call for nationalisation of the banks (coupled with "end the bailouts"). Leaving aside that the banks are either already nationalised, partly nationalised or on the verge of nationalisation, this is hardly a "socialist" measure but simply a scheme for trying to ameliorate the capitalist crisis. Far from offering a challenge to Ireland's clericalist capitalist state, the ULA will amount to an auxiliary to the Labour Party.

A general election would almost certainly result in a coalition government of the bourgeois Fine Gael and the Labour Party. Indeed, the Labour Party is currently seen as the party which will win the votes of workers who traditionally have voted Fianna Fail. Currently polling at 27 per cent, compared to its usual 10-12 per cent, Labour's potential role in the next government would be particularly useful to the capitalist class. Promising "to give the people the leadership required to turn this country around, rebuild the economy and restore national morale," Labour is best placed of all the parties to try to convince the working class to knuckle down and accept austerity.

In Ireland, "left" governments take the form of "popular fronts"—i.e., coalitions between the reformist Labour Party and outright representatives of the bourgeoisie. Revolutionaries are unconditionally opposed to these alliances, which chain the workers to the capitalist class enemy. Likewise, we are opposed to voting for bourgeois parties, including the Sinn Féin nationalists and the Green Party.

Sinn Féin is itself seeking to capitalise on the decline of Fianna Fail. Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams, a longtime leader of the party in [Protestant-dominated] Northern Ireland, plans to contest a Dail seat south of the border. Sinn Féin's Martin McGuinness occupies the deputy First Minister's post in the Northern Ireland Assembly, where his party has shown its loyalty to the sectarian Orange state, including to its police force which is notorious for brutal subjugation of the oppressed Catholics. The British Army has retained a garrison of several thousand troops who can be called upon instantly to provide "assistance" to the Police Service of Northern Ireland/Royal Ulster Constabulary. We demand: All British troops and bases out of Northern Ireland now!

Sinn Féin's support for state repression against dissident Irish Republicans in the North ought to go down well in the Dublin government, which has been committed to repression of Republicans since the foundation of the Irish Republic in 1921-22. Sinn Féin shares Fianna Fail's commitment to Catholic nationalism, which is viciously anti-woman, anti-Traveller [Gypsy] and anti-working-class. Sinn Féin has produced its own plan for economic recovery, promising to cut spending. This is further proof of Sinn Féin's commit-

John Reed...

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desert, is the owner of big copper mines where thousands of American workers are exploited, and when these workers dared to go on strike the guards protecting Mr. Dodge's mines drove them at the point of the bayonet out into the desert—just as was done to the Armenians.

Many Armenians are grateful to America for its attitude to the Armenians who suffered from the brutality of the Turks during the war. But what has America done for the Armenians apart from issuing wordy declarations? Nothing. I was in Constantinople at that time, in 1915, and I know that the missionaries refused to make any serious protest against the atrocities, saying that they had a lot of property in Turkey and so did not want to bring pressure to bear on the Turks. The American ambassador, Mr. Strauss, himself a millionaire who exploited thousands of workers in his enterprises in America, proposed that the entire Armenian people be shipped to America, and himself donated quite a large sum for this project to be carried out; but his plan was to make the Armenians work in American factories and provide cheap labour so as to increase the profits of Mr. Strauss and his friends.

But why do the American capitalists promise aid and food tn Armenia? Is it out of pure philanthropy? If so, let them feed the peoples of Central America and help the Negroes of America itself.

No. The main reason is that there is mineral wealth in Armenia, and that it is a big reservnir of cheap labour which can be exploited hy American capitalists.

The American capitalists want to win the confidence of the Armenians with a view to getting their claws into Armenia and enslaving the Armenian nation. It is with this aim that American missionaries have established schools in the Near East.

But there is also another very important reason: the American capitalists, together with the other capitalist nations, united in the League of Nations, are afraid that the workers and peasants of Armenia will follow the example of Soviet Russia and Soviet Azerbaidzhan, will take power and their country's resources into their own hands, and will work for themselves, making a united front with the workers and peasants of the whole world against world imperialism. The American capitalists are afraid of a revolution in the East.

Promising food to starving peoples and at the same time organizing a blockade of the Soviet Republics—that is the policy of the United States. The blockade of Soviet Russia has starved to death thousands of Russian women and children. This same method of blockade was applied in order to turn the Hungarian people against their Soviet Government. The same tactic is now being used in order to draw the people of White Hungary into war against Soviet Russia. This method is also being used in the small countries bordering on Russia—Finland, Estonia, Latvia. But now all these small countries have been obliged to make peace with Soviet Russia: they are bankrupt and starving. Now the American Government no longer offers them food; they are no longer of any use to America, and so their peoples can starve.

The American capitalists prnmise bread to Armenia. This is an old trick. They promise bread but they never give it. Did Hungary get bread after the fall of the Soviet Government? No. The Hungarian people are still starving today. Did the Baltic countries get bread? No. At a time when the starving Estonians had nothing but potatoes, the American capitalists sent them ships laden with rotten potatoes which could not be sold at a profit in America. No, comrades, Uncle Sam is not one ever to give anybody something for nothing. He comes along with a sack stuffed with straw in one hand and a whip in the other. Whoever takes Uncle Sam's promises at their face value will find himself obliged to pay for them with blood and sweat. The American workers are demanding an ever larger share of the product of their labour; with a view to preventing revolution at home, the American capitalists are forced to seek out colonial peoples to exploit, peoples who will furnish sufficient profit to keep the American workers in obedience and so make them participants in the exploitation of the Armenians. I represent thousands of revolutionary American workers who know this, and who understand that, acting together with the Armenian workers and peasants, with the toiling masses of the whole world, they will overthrow capitalism. World capitalism will be destrnyed, and all the peoples will be free. We appreciate the need for snlidarity between all the oppressed and toiling peoples, for unity of the revolutionary workers of all the countries of Europe and America under the leadership of the Russian Bolsheviks, in the Cnmmunist International. And we say to you, peoples of the East: Do not believe the promises of the American capitalists!

There is only one road to freedom. Unite with the Russian workers and peasants who have overthrown their capitalists and whose Red Army has beaten the foreign imperialists! Follow the red star of the Communist International!■

North Korea...

(continued from page 1)

China considers to be under its sovereignty. The U.S. is increasingly trying to pressure Beijing to "rein in" North Korea, which is heavily dependent on its economic as well as diplomatic ties with the Chinese deformed workers state. In the trove of U.S. diplomatic cables just released by WikiLeaks is a stern message from 2007 demanding that China "take action" to stop North Korea from shipping missile parts to Iran through Beijing. Now, with China refusing to condemn North Korea for the shelling of Yeonpyeong, the U.S., Japan and South Korea are rejecting Beijing's request for emergency talks over the crisis.

The Yeonpyeong incident took place only days after the Obama administration raised a renewed hue and cry over North Korea's nuclear capacity. Stanford University scientist Siegfried Hecker, a former director of the U.S. nuclear lab at Los Alamos, had reported that North Korean officials had shown him a light-water reactor construction site at the Yongbyon nuclear complex. While Hecker noted that the facility was "much more suitable for making electricity than for bombs," he also opined that a companion ultramodern uranium enrichment facility designed to support civilian electrical generation had the ability to provide fuel for dozens of nuclear bombs. North Korea manifestly needs both electricity and nuclear weapons, the latter to deter imperialist military attack. Indeed, the fact that Pyongyang has demonstrated such capacity has served to stay the hands of the U.S. and its South Korean client state.

The current U.S.-South Korean exercises follow similar military maneuvers that began in July, ostensibly in response to the sinking of the South Korean Navy corvette *Cheonan* near Baengnyeong Island in March. A U.S.-South Korean report claimed that the warship had been sunk by a North Korean torpedo, which Pyongyang denied. China and Russia refused to go along with the story. We noted at the time that "the 'official' story stinks." But we insisted that "even if the North Korean navy did sink the *Cheonan*, it would have been an act of defense against repeated provocations by the U.S. and South Korea" ("Defend North Korea Against U.S. Imperialism!" *WV* No. 960, 4 June). Our article explained, "As Marxists, our attitude regarding this affair is determined not by claims of who was responsible for the sinking, the cause of which is shrouded in mystery, but by *class* considerations: Despite being saddled with a nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy, North Korea is a workers state based on the overthrow of capitalist rule."

The U.S. launched the Korean War (under the UN flag) not only to smash social revolution on the peninsula but also to overthrow the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state that issued out of the 1949 Revolution. The entry of a million Chinese People's Liberation Army troops turned the tide against the imperialist forces, leading to a stalemate at the 38th parallel, which divides North from South Korea. A peace treaty was never signed, and the South refused to sign the armistice agreement between the U.S. and North Korea. Both Yeonpyeong and Baengnyeong islands lie in disputed waters demarcated by a line unilaterally drawn by the U.S. which the North has never recognized. Since the Korean War, the U.S. has maintained a massive military presence in the South, today numbering 28,500 troops, while subjecting North Korea to decades of military encirclement and embargo. We say: ***All U.S. troops and bases out of South Korea!***

Despite the rule of a nepotistic and bizarre Stalinist regime, North Korea's planned economy significantly outperformed the South until the mid 1970s, creating a modern industrial infrastructure. At the same time, being divided from the South by a "demilitarized zone" packed with more weaponry per square meter than any place on earth has severely distorted the North's economy. The situation became desperate in the aftermath of the 1991-92 counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, which had provided the bulk of military and technological aid to North Korea. In 1992, China's nationalist Stalinist regime cut off shipments of cheap oil to the North in order to obtain diplomatic and economic relations with South Korea. In 1995, North Korea was hit by a horrific famine, stemming from floods and droughts, from which it has still not recovered.

As Trotskyists, we stand for the unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states—North Korea, China, Vietnam and Cuba—against imperialism and internal capitalist counterrevolution. At the same time, we fight for proletarian political revolution to oust the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies, whose policies are encapsulated in the dogma of "building socialism in one country." Opposing the fight for international proletarian revolution, the privileged bureaucracies instead pursue a futile quest for "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism, undermining the defense of those states against the class enemy.

In 2006 and again in 2009, China criminally voted for sanctions against North Korea in the UN Security Council following missile tests by Pyongyang. Likewise, Beijing has repeatedly brokered "six-party talks"—involving the U.S., China, Japan, Russia and the two Koreas—aimed at disarming North Korea. Beijing's craven appeasement of imperialism not only imperils North Korea but dangerously undermines the defense of China itself.

For their part, the North Korean Stalinists have long called for "peaceful reunification" with the South—a recipe for reunification on a capitalist basis. An article titled "WikiLeaks Row: China Wants Korean Reunification, Officials Confirm" in the London *Guardian* (30 November) cites Chinese officials in Europe who say that Beijing also favors the "independent and peaceful reunification of the Korean peninsula in the long term." The program of *capitalist* reunification is a betrayal not only of the North Korean workers state but also of the historically militant and combative South Korean proletariat. As we go to press, Hyundai workers on temporary contracts are in the 16th day of a plant occupation in Ulsan, and warrants have been issued for the arrest of seven of the strike leaders.

Many South Koreans feel a sense of solidarity with the North based on strong nationalist sentiments fed by a century of Japanese and American imperialist overlordship. But Korea is divided along *class* lines. Korean nationalism, promoted by both the North Korean Stalinist regime and the South Korean reformist left, serves to tie the South Korean proletariat to its own capitalist ruling class. What is needed is the forging of a Leninist-Trotskyist party based on proletarian internationalism to lead the struggle for the *revolutionary reunification of Korea*—for socialist revolution in the South and workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats in the North. Linked to the fight for proletarian political revolution in China, this struggle must ultimately extend to the victory of proletarian rule in the imperialist heartlands of Japan and the U.S.■

WV Photo

November 29: New York City protest denounces U.S. threats against North Korea.

ment to serve the bankers and bosses and their capitalist system, which is ruining the lives of the working class.

For Proletarian Internationalism!

According to Irish economist Morgan Kelly, as many as 100,000 mortgage holders will default on their payments in the coming period. "People are going to extraordinary lengths—not paying other bills and borrowing heavily from their parents—to meet mortgage repayments, both out of fear of losing their homes and to avoid the stigma of admitting that they are broke," said Kelly (*Irish Times*, 8 November). He noted that the presence of a permanent team of European Central Bank "observers" in Dublin's Department of Finance (known collectively as "The Germans") has led to a nationalist hue and cry over Ireland's "sovereignty" being surrendered to the EU.

The Irish bailout also brought forth an outpouring of chauvinism in England, not least from right-wing Tory backbenchers [Members of Parliament not serving in the Cabinet]. However, the situation was not without its ironies. Noting that "heavily indebted Britain is borrowing another £7bn or so to lend to catastrophically indebted Ireland," journalist Philip Stephens remarked in the *Financial Times* (22 November) that Tory opponents of the EU didn't know whether "to savour the eurozone crisis or to berate David Cameron for contributing to the Irish bail-out."

British prime minister Cameron tried to assuage his backbenchers by claiming that the £7 billion his government made available to Ireland is merely help for "a friend in need." Not quite: Britain's capitalist rulers are offering a *loan* to Ireland which, if accepted, will have to be repaid. This is what the British government is today demanding of Iceland, which received such a loan made when its banking system tanked in 2008 and the economy was thrown into recession. At the time, Britain's Labour government offered a loan not out of generosity but because Icelandic banks held huge funds belonging to British investors, including local councils. Cameron's motivation in regard to Ireland is not unconnected to the fact that the British economy is in the doldrums and Britain's trade with Ireland exceeds that with China, India, Brazil and Russia put together.

The working class must understand that the capitalist system itself can and must be overthrown by workers revolution. A revolutionary leadership would fight for a series of transitional demands linking the struggle against the current attacks on the working class and the poor to an understanding of the need for proletarian socialist revolution. Faced with mass unemployment, a class-struggle leadership in the unions would demand sharing the work among all workers, with no loss in pay. Against job insecurity, it is necessary to eliminate the differences between workers on temporary and permanent contracts, requiring a fight to organise the unorganised. In the interests of women, who are especially oppressed in the Irish clericalist capitalist state, we call for free abortion on demand and for free, quality, 24-hour childcare. Against the divide-and-rule racism of the bourgeois state, we demand ***full citizenship rights for all immigrants!***

We are implacably opposed to the EU, an imperialist trade bloc within which the major European imperialists co-operate against the working class and immigrants, as well as against their imperialist rivals in the U.S. and Japan. Within the EU, Germany, France and Britain dominate the poorer member states. The "second tier" includes East European countries that were devastated by capitalist counterrevolution, which also destroyed the Soviet Union in 1991-92. Today East Europe is used as a source of cheap labour, raw materials and markets by the big powers within the EU.

The single European currency has enabled German imperialism to increase its competitive edge over other countries in the euro zone. But the single currency, and the EU itself, are inherently unstable entities, subject to the conflicting national interests of Europe's capitalist governments. Our proletarian-internationalist opposition to the EU is counterposed to reactionary "Euroscepticism" and national chauvinism, which is poison to class struggle, serving to pit workers against each other along national lines and reinforcing racism.

Ireland's extraordinary growth rate during the Celtic Tiger years was based on extremely low corporate taxes, a construction boom and a housing market bubble. U.S. corporations have taken advantage not only of Ireland's 12.5 per cent corporate tax rate but also of a scam known as the "Double Irish." This is not a large Jameson but a method of escaping even the low tax rate by shuttling profits into and out of Irish subsidiaries, as allowed by Irish law. This particular tax dodge is favoured by Facebook and Google.

Ireland's working people have now fallen victim to the boom-bust cycle that is inevitable under capitalism. What must be understood is that the only way out of this cycle is through the workers in Ireland—North and South—joining with the multiethnic proletariat in Britain, which has a large Irish component, in the overthrow of the capitalist order throughout these islands. The working class in Britain, which is currently facing an enormous attack at the hands of the Tory-Liberal Democrat government's budget cuts, must wage class struggle to defend its own interests and forge a new, revolutionary leadership in opposition to Labour reformism.

As proletarian internationalists, we vehemently oppose nationalist protectionism and anti-Irish chauvinism, as virulently expressed in the demand "British jobs for British workers." Our programme for a workers republic in Ireland, part of a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles, is based on the understanding that the fate of the working classes on these islands is indissolubly linked. Socialist revolution will sweep away the reactionary "United Kingdom," the Orange statelet in Northern Ireland which is inherently oppressive of the Catholic minority, and the Catholic clericalist state in the South. Our task is to build Leninist-Trotskyist parties dedicated to the fight for socialist revolution on both sides of the Irish border and both sides of the Irish Sea—an essential part of the struggle for a Socialist United States of Europe.■

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Miners...

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> reaction, abetted by international imperialism, is ready."
>
> —*Spartacist* No. 19, November-December 1970

What was needed in Chile in 1970-73, as today, was a revolutionary party to lead the workers in socialist revolution. Tragically, in the absence of a revolutionary leadership that could break the Chilean proletariat from its class-collaborationist leaders, our prediction proved all too accurate. Those leftists in Chile and elsewhere who supported the popular front helped deceive the workers into believing it was possible to significantly improve their situation without breaking with the capitalist parties and ultimately overthrowing the bourgeois order. Chile provided a dearly paid confirmation of Karl Marx's teaching that "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes" (*The Civil War in France*, 1871). In the end, the bourgeoisie used its state power to crush the proletariat.

Allende Paved Way for Pinochet

The UP came to power amid intense class struggle that had been sweeping the country for several years. In March 1966, troops led by then-colonel Pinochet gunned down eight workers in the copper mining town of El Salvador. By the following year, a wave of strikes was sweeping the mines, steel mills and other industries, while agricultural workers and landless peasants occupied the landed estates.

The UP government from the beginning rested on a tacit agreement with the dominant bourgeois party, the Christian Democrats, without whose votes Allende could not get a single one of his reforms passed by Congress. And those proposed reforms were quite modest. In opposition to the revolutionary call to expropriate the capitalist class, the UP was pledged to protect private property. Its program simply called for a few nationalizations, notably of copper mines, whose net result would be an improvement of the position of the Chilean bourgeoisie vis-à-vis the imperialists. Under the land reform of the Allende government, peasants were to pay for all land they received and most of the large capitalist farms were exempted. Both the policy of nationalizations and the tepid land reform plan were carried over from the Christian Democratic regime that preceded the UP.

The UP government adopted a policy of appeasing the rightists and ratcheting up repression against the workers while pushing austerity and speedup (which it promoted as the "Battle for Production"). In the fall of 1972, truck owner-drivers, supported by shopkeepers and other petty-bourgeois sectors, staged a countrywide work stoppage. Allende responded by inviting military leaders into the government—and naming Pinochet acting commander-in-chief of the army. Allende also promulgated a law that permitted unannounced raids by the military in search of arms. Though ostensibly directed against both right- and left-wing "extremists," this law was used exclusively against the unions, workers occupying factories and the workers parties. Meanwhile, fascist groups such as Patria y Libertad built up sizable arms stockpiles.

In the spring of 1973, the government took aim at the 13,000 copper miners at nationalized El Teniente, then the largest underground mine in the world, as a test case for a broad assault on the strategically powerful copper miners. The UP provoked a strike at El Teniente by attempting to do away with the sliding scale of wages (cost-of-living escalator), a vital gain given the rampant inflation at the time. Allende sent riot cops against the miners and moved to "restore order" in two mining provinces by placing them under military control.

While Allende sought to vilify the strikers as "privileged," the Stalinist CP went even further, labeling them "fascists." The Castroite MIR (Revolutionary Left Movement), which was formally outside the UP coalition but gave the Allende government "critical support," denounced the El Teniente strike as "more disastrous than any avalanche or landslide" because of the lost revenue that it was costing the country (*Punto Final*, 5 June 1973).

Gerrelsen/Gamma

Troops round up leftists in Santiago during September 1973 coup.

Bourgeois forces such as the Christian Democrats sought to use the issue of the strike against the UP government. The Christian Democrats had earlier won control of the copper unions in elections after miners at Chuquicamata had gone on strike and Cuban Stalinist leader Fidel Castro, who supported the Allende regime, unsuccessfully appealed to them to "sacrifice more" for the good of the fatherland. As we wrote at the time of the El Teniente strike:

> "A revolutionary leadership of the unions would rapidly extend the strike and demand the formation of a government of the workers parties alone, which would expropriate the key sectors of the economy.... The ability of the Christian Democrats to win control of the miners' unions is due solely to the complete failure of the left parties to put forward such a program in the labor movement."
>
> —"Defend Chilean Miners' Strike" (*WV* No. 23, 22 June 1973)

In the final months of the Allende government, sections of the proletariat were beginning to reject its anti-working-class policies by forming the "*cordones industriales*" (district coordinating bodies of factory committees) in the industrial belts around Santiago. An acute pre-revolutionary situation had ripened with the emergence of these embryonic dual-power formations, and the leftist coalition in power was increasingly unable to contain the militant working class. Thus, the central goal of the reactionary putschists led by Pinochet was not merely the ouster of a shaky regime but the annihilation of the organized workers movement.

In order to excuse their own betrayals in Chile and alibi the SP-CP policy of class collaboration, the Stalinists and other reformists claimed that the coup was the work of fascists and extreme reactionaries in league with the CIA. There is no doubt that the ultra-right provided leadership of the coup and that the CIA was actively involved in helping foment it. But to hold the "ultras" and the CIA solely responsible was to ignore the fact that every important section of the Chilean ruling class—including the "moderate" Christian Democrats and the "constitutionalist" officers included in the UP regime—was involved in the coup in one way or another.

For leftists, the central lesson of Chile under Allende is summed up in the following remark made decades earlier by the revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky: "In reality, the Popular Front is the ***main question of proletarian class strategy*** for this epoch" ("The POUM and the Popular Front," 16 July 1936). In Chile, as in Spain 1936-39, France 1936 and Indonesia 1965, the popular front has always served to undermine the workers' class consciousness and set them up for often bloody defeat. Drawing that lesson is a crucial task in the forging of a Trotskyist party in Chile—independent of and in opposition to all wings of the Chilean bourgeoisie—as a section of a reforged Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution.■

India...

(continued from page 9)

industrial plants which Stalin had refused to locate east of the Volga until that summer) and an almost fatal blow being delivered to the workers state.

The Soviet Union survived because ***despite Stalin*** the Red Army fought tooth and nail to stop the onslaught. In December 1941 Zhukov's effective counterattack was wrecked by Stalin's personal meddling and as late as the summer of 1942 the simple incompetence of Stalin and one of his toadies led to the loss of 200,000 men in the Crimea. It was only with the emergence of a competent layer of generals not liable to listen so much to Stalin that the heroism of the Red Army and Soviet peoples was turned into the liberation of the Soviet homeland and Eastern Europe from the Nazi scourge. Not only did Stalin's general policies of "socialism in one country" lead to near fatal catastrophe but his particular military contribution was disastrous.

For a Revolutionary Proletarian Solution!

At independence the subcontinent faced the unspeakable horrors of Partition and today it remains one of the most impoverished, oppressed and exploited areas in the world, a veritable prison-house for national minorities, women and lower castes. The communalist slaughters engulfing Partition killed between one and two million Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus (mainly in Punjab and Bengal) and the forced migrations in its aftermath displaced over eleven million. A *New York Times* correspondent, Robert Trumbull, reported of the Partition: "In India today blood flows oftener than rain falls. I have seen dead by the hundreds and, worst of all, thousands of Indians without eyes, feet or hands. Death by shooting is merciful and uncommon" (quoted in Collins and Lapierre, *Freedom at Midnight*). Muslim babies were discovered "roasted like piglets on spits" and the 45-mile road from Lahore to Amritsar became such an "open graveyard" that, according to one British officer, "The vultures had become so bloated by their feasts they could no longer fly." A stationmaster at Amritsar recounted what had initially seemed to be a "phantom train," one of many rolling into Punjabi stations at the time: "The floor of the compartment before him was a mass of human bodies, throats cut, skulls smashed, bodies eviscerated. Arms, legs, trunks of bodies were strewn along the corridors of compartments.... He turned to look back at the train. As he did, he saw in great white-washed letters on the flank of the last car the [Pakistani] Moslem assassins' calling card. 'This train is our Independence gift to [Indian Congress nationalists] Nehru and Patel'" (*ibid*).

The lessons of the struggle for Indian independence and the social liberation of India's toiling masses are crucial not only for revolutionaries on the subcontinent but in all those countries where the permanent revolution applies, from South Africa to Iran. A Leninist-Trotskyist party must be built in irreconcilable struggle against every kind of nationalism and popular frontism, counterposing a revolutionary programme for the emancipation and reconstruction of the oppressed nation *under the dictatorship of the proletariat*. Writing in 1915 of the tasks for Russian revolutionaries Leon Trotsky called for "a ***revolutionary workers' government***, the conquest of power by the Russian proletariat":

> "But revolution is first and foremost a question of power—not of the state form (constituent assembly, republic, united states) but of the social content of the government. The demands for a constituent assembly and the confiscation of land under present conditions lose all direct revolutionary significance without the readiness of the proletariat to fight for the conquest of power...." ("The Struggle for Power")

Because the Bolsheviks were committed to such a programme, the Russian Revolution of 1917 produced the first workers state on the planet. The USSR stood then as a beacon for the colonial and semi-colonial masses struggling for their liberation, as well as for the exploited working masses in the imperialist countries. Lenin and Trotsky's Third International, later to be destroyed by Stalin, sought to bring the lessons of October to the workers of every land.

Today we in the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) fight to forge a revolutionary international which Lenin and Trotsky would recognise as their own. It will be an especially gratifying victory when the workers of the entire Indian subcontinent lead all the oppressed in throwing off the chains of neocolonial enslavement through victorious socialist revolution.■

International Communist League pamphlet comprising three articles from ICL press: "The Development and Extension of Leon Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution," "A Trotskyist Critique of Germany 1923 and the Comintern" and "Down With Executive Offices of the Capitalist State!" These articles together constitute an introduction to the historically founded principles and program of Trotskyism (i.e., genuine Marxism).

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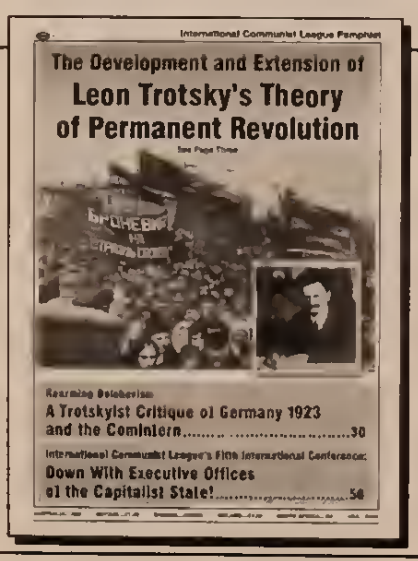

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Workers Vanguard **skips an issue in December.**

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WORKERS VANGUARD

2010 SUBJECT INDEX

Issues No. 949 (1 January) through No. 970 (3 December)

GUIDE TO THE SUBJECT INDEX

- This subject index covers issues of *Workers Vanguard* published during 2010, from issue No. 949 (1 January) through the end-of-the-year issue No. 970 (3 December). During this time, *WV* was published biweekly, except skipping three alternate issues in June, July and August, and skipping the last issue in December.
- The fullest listing is by SUBJECT. Subject headings are arranged alphabetically. Entries are listed chronologically with two exceptions: all entries comprising a series are listed together immediately following the first entry of the series; corrections immediately follow the relevant entry. An asterisk (*) after the page location of an entry indicates that a correction follows.
- Entries are listed under subject heads. In some cases, subject heads are broken down into subcategories. These subcategories are listed immediately after the initial subject head and preceded by a dot (•). The numbers following each entry headline give the issue number, date and page number(s) for the article. Thus:

  Free the MOVE Prisoners!, #959, 21 May (2, 5)

  means the headline of the article, issue No. 959, dated 21 May 2010 beginning on page 2 and continuing on page 5.
- No entry is listed twice; refer to cross-references for guidance in locating the subject head for particular articles. Cross-references are of two types: those following the word "see" deal centrally with the subject head, those following the words "see also" are related articles. Subject heads in cross-references are separated by a semicolon, while subcategories of subject heads are separated by a comma. Thus:

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  means that articles about environmentalism can be found by going to the subject head **GLOBAL WARMING**. Related articles can be found by going to the subject head **UNITED STATES** and looking under the subcategory **General**.
- Individuals mentioned in articles are usually not a subject heading unless the article is primarily about the given person. Foreign political organizations are generally cross-referenced to their appropriate countries, while U.S. political organizations are listed under their organizational names.
- Articles relating to foreign countries are listed under geographical headings and not normally under any other subject heading. Articles that deal centrally with U.S. foreign policy will be found under **U.S.: International Relations** or under the relevant geographical heading. For example, articles about the U.S. occupation of Iraq will be found under **IRAQ**.
- Articles under the *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* (CSDN) masthead are by the Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle, non-sectarian, legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League.
- Abbreviations used in entries are:
  - C: Correction
  - CSDN: *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* article
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Free the Anti-Zionist Protesters! Drop the Charges Now! (*Workers Hammer*), #959, 21 May (9)

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Anti-Sex Witchhunt Targets Teachers (*Spartacist Canada*) (YSp), #952, 12 Feb. (4)

Parliamentary Cretinism and Class Collaboration—A Prorogue's Gallery (*Spartacist Canada*), #955, 26 Mar. (4, 5)

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